Johns Hopkins University

DESIGNING A RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION SHARED SERVICE CENTER

by
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Abstract

Institutions of higher education are part of a movement to increase efficiency, become more cost-effective, and provide consistent service quality. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is no different and developed a strategic framework that included a vision to be the leading global public research university in America. This framework, The Blueprint for Next, included a component for Optimizing Operations to improve administrative functions. Research administration was not exempt from this initiative and as such, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research took this as an opportunity to provide enhanced service, improved compliance, and better staff opportunities under a shared service model. This Capstone Project describes the design process for a shared service support infrastructure for research administration that can be implemented as a pilot for feasibility purposes.

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Abbreviations

FiRST	Finance & Research Support Team
ORIS	Office of Research Information Systems
OVCR	Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research
RASR	Rapid Administrative Support Request
PSLA	Partnership and Service Level Agreement

Glossary

Deferred Outflows of Resources. A consumption of net assets by the government that is applicable to a future reporting period.

Fiscal Year. Any twelve-month period for which annual accounts are kept (at Penn State University, July 1 through June 30; Federal Fiscal is October 1 through September 30).

Proposal. An application for funding that contains all information necessary to describe project plans, staff capabilities, and funds requested. Formal proposals are officially approved and submitted by an organization in the name of a principal investigator.

Sponsored Research. All research and development activities that are sponsored by Federal and non-Federal agencies and organizations.

Total Assets. The sum of all cash, investments, furniture, fixtures, equipment, receivables, intangibles, and any other items of value owned by a person or a business entity.

Chapter 1. Introduction

The author has been Director of Financial Services within the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill since June 2016. The mission of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the nation's first public university, has been teaching, research, and public service.[1] In Fall 2020, the University offered 74 bachelor's degree programs, 104 master's degree programs, 65 doctoral degree programs, and 7 professional degree programs.[2] In Fall 2020, the University was comprised of 4,085 faculty, 19,276 undergraduate students, 8,214 graduate students, and 2,483 professional students.[3] At the end of the most recent fiscal year, June 30, 2020, the University had a solid financial position with total assets and deferred outflows of resources at $12.0 billion, of which, $1.05 billion was the result of sponsored research activities.[4]

During this time, the author has led the finance, accounting, budget, and financial services operations for the second largest research generating division at the University.[5] As such, the author has been responsible for 12 administrative compliances offices along with 13 research centers and institutes.[6] The research centers and institutes have had varied funding portfolios based on their individual missions. In addition, the research centers and institutes

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[1] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Mission & Values," accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.unc.edu/about/mission/.
[2] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "By the Numbers," accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.unc.edu/about/by-the-numbers/.
[3] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Office of Institutional Research & Assessment," accessed April 8, 2021, https://oira.unc.edu/reports/.
[4] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "2020 Comprehensive Financial Report," accessed April 8, 2021, https://finance.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/298/2020/11/2020-comprehensive-annual-financial-report.pdf.
[5] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, FY 2020 Research Funding," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/facts-rankings/funding/fy-2020/.
[6] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "UNC Research Organizational Chart," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/61/2014/02/orgchart.pdf.

have historically operated under a decentralized research administration infrastructure. The concept of shared services was discussed among University leadership and the decision to implement was at the discretion of each major campus unit. This Capstone Project is intended to describe the author's involvement in designing a shared service model among research centers and institutes within the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR).

1.1. Background.

Research at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has quadrupled over the past 15 years, which strongly established the University as one of America's top-ranked research universities.[7] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was ranked 6th in the United States for federal research expenditures, totaling $721 million annually in fiscal year 2019 by Higher Education Research and Development Survey rankings.[8] In fiscal year 2019, The University of North Carolina expended $1.15 billion dollars in sponsored research from all funding sources, making it the 12th largest US research university in research volume and annual.[9] In 2019, research centers and institutes received over $476 million annual in external funding to North Carolina for scientific research.[10]

Supporting the University's $1 billion research enterprise is the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research. OVCR provides oversight and development of the research enterprise

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[7] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "UNC Research Facts and Rankings," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/facts-rankings/.
[8] National Science Foundation, "Table 24. Federally financed higher education R&D expenditures, ranked by all federal R&D expenditures, by R&D field: FY 2019," accessed April 8, 2021, https://ncses.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf21314.
[9] National Science Foundation, "Table 5. Higher education R&D expenditures at higher education institutions in both survey populations, ranked by all R&D expenditures, by source of funds: FY 2019," accessed April 8, 2021, https://ncses.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf21314.
[10] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "UNC Research Facts and Rankings," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/facts-rankings/.

by setting strategic priorities for research, managing proposals and awards, providing research infrastructure, identifying funding opportunities, developing research teams and partnerships, and overseeing regulatory compliance, ethics, and conflicts of interest management.[11]

The Blueprint for Next, the University's strategic framework, encompasses a vision to be the leading global public research university in America.[12] The strategic initiative related to this Capstone Project is Optimize Operations. The objectives under Optimize Operations include:

- Design, implement, execute, assess, and continuously improve the administrative operations that support the University's mission of teaching, research, and public service.
- Implement a robust data governance structure and process to inform decision-making and drive change.
- Create and maintain world class physical facilities and infrastructure to support our institutional mission.[13]

Innovation and collaboration have been essential to solve the most difficult challenges of the day. A successful research center or institute has been a powerful catalyst for novel ideas and positive change. Infrastructure and support services necessary to help scholars and scientists produce their best work have been provided by research centers and Institutes at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.[14] Optimizing the research administration

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[11] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/administration/.
[12] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Carolina Next," accessed April 8, 2021, https://carolinanext.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1105/2020/01/CarolinaNext.pdf.
[13] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/administration/.
[14] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Research Centers & Institutes," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/centers-institutes/.

infrastructure is essential to creating an effective and sustainable organization under the initiative, The Blueprint for Next.

1.2. Statement of the Problem.

Identified in The Blueprint for Next, the outdated operating environment at the University has been decentralized and fragmented which has resulted in difficulties making decisions for the university as a whole.[15] In addition, it has limited the University's ability to be productive, efficient, and effective with regard to research administration. As a result, OVCR had an opportunity to identify more efficient and effective ways to deliver services and share resources for mission critical business activities in research administration. The OVCR took advantage of this opportunity through as part of this Capstone Project.

1.3. Project Question.

Related to the initiative, The Blueprint for Next, this Capstone Project addresses the strategic initiative, Optimize Operations, through an opportunity to create and implement a new model to more efficiently support the delivery of research administrative services that were currently being provided by many individual departments at the University, not just the research Centers and Institutes. Ultimately, this will play an important role in the University's vision to be the leading global public research university in America.[16]

This Capstone Project will describe the process for designing a shared services model for research administration in an effort to provide faculty with support from subject matter

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[15] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/administration/.
[16] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/administration/.

experts, consistently, so they can focus on the actual conduct of research. As a result, this model should allow for increased proposal submissions and awards for the University in support of its vision.

1.4. Project Objectives.

The objectives of this Capstone Project are to:

- Define activities in scope
- Identify staff in scope
- Identify staffing classification and role
- Identify reporting structure
- Develop Standard Operating Procedures
- Develop templates for financial reporting and proposal budgeting
- Develop partnership and service level agreements
- Develop a workflow tool
- Establish a cost model
- Identify physical space

1.5. Significance.

As described in Section 1.1. Background, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill outlined in the strategic framework for The Blueprint for Next, to be the leading global public research university in America. One of the treasured values for this vision is a commitment "to operating effectively, sustainably, ethically, transparently, nimbly, with technological sophistication, at the pace of change".[17] Through this design process, it is expected that the benefits will include:

- Enhanced Service – provides clear and consistent service expectations for research administration support.
- Improved Compliance – improves controls over regulatory aspects of similar transactions currently being performed across multiple departments.
- Better Staff Opportunities – facilitates a strong network with colleagues providing the same research administration support and creates a strong team culture.

1.6. Exclusions and Limitations.

This Capstone Project will not address the other strategic initiatives within The Blueprint for Next, such as:

- Build Our Community Together
- Strengthen Student Success
- Enable Career Development
- Discover
- Promote Democracy
- Serve to Benefit Society
- Globalize

The focus of this Capstone Project was on designing a shared services model for research administration for pilot implementation purposes. It is in direct support of addressing

[17] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/administration/.

the strategic initiative in The Blueprint for Next, Optimize Operations section, and was designed to improve administrative operations that support one aspect of the University's mission, research.[18]

[18] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research," accessed April 8, 2021, https://research.unc.edu/about/administration/.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1. Overview of Literature Review.

Many institutions of higher education have explored the idea of finding a model to support the research enterprise from an operational and administrative standpoint. An increasing number of organizations and institutions have implemented or are transitioning to a research administration shared service model.[19] This is part of a global movement toward increased efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and consistency of service quality in recent years.[20] Shared service models function as an extension of central research administration offices by effectually taking on pre- and post-award work that had historically been done at the department level at most organizations.[21]

Shared service model at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was not an unfamiliar concept to the author as it was already in place in whole or partially within two major campus units, Finance and Operations and the School of Medicine. Moreover, shared services were implemented within the Division of Finance and Operations in the areas of finance, human resources, information technology, communications, and training and professional development.[22] The School of Medicine Finance and Business Operations created Finance & Research Support Team (FiRST) which includes finance, human resources, and

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[19] Davis-Hamilton, Zoya. "Research Administration Service Centers," accessed April 8, 2021, http://srainternational.org/publications/catalyst/201606/research-administration-service-centers.
[20] Davis-Hamilton, Zoya. "Research Administration Service Centers," accessed April 8, 2021, http://srainternational.org/publications/catalyst/201606/research-administration-service-centers.
[21] Davis-Hamilton, Zoya. "Research Administration Service Centers," accessed April 8, 2021, http://srainternational.org/publications/catalyst/201606/research-administration-service-centers.
[22] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Service Center of Excellence," accessed April 8, 2021, https://fo.unc.edu/sce/about/.

research administration support.[23] As a result, the author conducted a literature review to identify, evaluate, and summarize the published research literature about research administration shared service models.

2.2. Details of Review.

Shared services have been a model to provide research administration support at research intensive institutions.[24] There is no real one-size-fits-all model for implementing a research administration shared service model. There are three primary models for research administration:

- Cradle-to-Grave

  Research administrators serve as part of teams or pods and are responsible for cradle-to-grave research administration for both pre-award and post-award.[25]

- Specialization

  Research administrators serve as part of teams or pods, but are responsible solely for either pre-award or post-award.[26]

- Hybrid

  Research administrators serve as part of teams or pods, but each team or pod designs their services in a unique fashion, one may have grants administrators

[23] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Finance and Research Support Team," accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.med.unc.edu/fbo/first/.
[24] Yale News, "Shared services gaining ground in higher education," accessed April 8, 2021, https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2012/03/23/shared-services-gaining-ground-in-higher-education/.
[25] Journal of Research Administration, Research Shared Services: A Case Study in Implementation, Accessed April 8, 2021, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1152284.
[26] Journal of Research Administration, Research Shared Services: A Case Study in Implementation, Accessed April 8, 2021, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1152284.

responsible for both pre- and post-award, while another may have their administrators specialize in either pre- or post-award.[27]

Regardless of the model, the value to research administration as a whole is two-fold. It provides an alternative operating model for research administration that, when done correctly, can result in an increase in quality, compliance, cost-savings, and service to faculty.[28] It also provides an instructional guide or roadmap to replicate at other institutions or in other areas of common organizational services.

There are considerations for leadership in making the decision to implement a shared services model. Specifically, "the services that will be provided and determine which model best balances the goals of the implementation with the impact of changes on the stakeholders served."[29] It is also equally important to describe why research administration shared services are well-suited for the institution, which aspects of the chosen model will be incorporated, and what outcomes are expected to be achieved.[30]

The mission and overarching goals of institutions of higher education often do not focus on cost efficiency as the determining factor for operational decisions. As an example, the motivations for implementation of a shared services model at the University of New Hampshire

[27] Journal of Research Administration, Research Shared Services: A Case Study in Implementation, Accessed April 8, 2021, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1152284.
[28] Davis-Hamilton, Zoya. "Research Administration Service Centers," accessed April 8, 2021, http://srainternational.org/publications/catalyst/201606/research-administration-service-centers.
[29] NCURA Magazine, "Shared service center implementations – an inclusive approach," accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.huronconsultinggroup.com/-/media/Resource-Media-Content/Education/JanFeb2014_Mag_Excerpt.pdf.
[30] University Business, "Shared services: Consolidate or close?" accessed April 8, 2021, https://universitybusiness.com/shared-services-consolidate-or-close/.

were standardization of services, enhancements to training offerings, improving internal controls, and eliminating shadow systems.[31]

In the article, Research Shared Services: A Case Study in Implementation, the authors stated, "If an institution believes in the caliber of its faculty and commits to building an administrative infrastructure capable of submitting and managing more complex sponsored research, then the increase in indirect costs will more than pay for this shared service investment".[32]

2.3. Applicability of Literature Review.

The Lee, et al, article shared the shared services model for research administration implementation processes at Thomas Jefferson University. The authors stated high level steps for implementation which included:

- Review Core IT and Human Resource Components Related to Research Administration
- Decide on the Model that is Best for your Institution
- Recruit the Leader/Director
- Develop Messaging and Performance Measurements
- Finalize Timeline[33]

The return on investment for this shared service delivery model succeeded by providing high levels of training, professional development, and cross-collaboration to employees, while

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[31] Stony Brook University Senate, "Report on Shared Services," accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/senatecas/_pdf/SharedServices-Report-Final.pdf.
[32] The Journal of Research Administration, "Research Shared Services: A Case Study in Implementation," accessed April 8, 2021, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1152284.pdf.
[33] Stony Brook University Senate, "Report on Shared Services," accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/senatecas/_pdf/SharedServices-Report-Final.pdf.

breaking down organizational silos and retaining investigators through delivering the necessary services with a high level of quality.[34]

[34] University Business, "Shared services: Consolidate or close?" accessed April 8, 2021, https://universitybusiness.com/shared-services-consolidate-or-close/.

Chapter 3. Needs Assessment

3.1. Need(s) Assessment.

As described in Section 1.1. Background, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill outlined in the strategic framework for The Blueprint for Next, to be the leading global public research university in America. Under this initiative, Optimizing Operations, focuses on improving administrative operations that support one aspect of the University's mission, research.[35]

High variability exists in the quantity and quality of support provided to Investigators and inconsistent communication exists between departments. Additionally, lack of an effective and efficient operation due to fragmentation, variance, redundancy, rework, and overall complexity in research administration exists. The University has undefined compliance controls and quality assurance processes which expose the University to institutional risk.

To become the leading global public research university in America, these challenges need to be addressed. This Capstone Project is an opportunity to assess the administrative function, research administration, as the University builds the transformation framework and design new models and new ways of working.

3.1.1. Assessment of Needs.

As part of The Blueprint for Next, an opportunity exists to create a new model to more efficiently support the delivery of common administrative services that are

[35] The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Carolina Next," accessed April 8, 2021, https://carolinanext.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1105/2020/01/CarolinaNext.pdf.

currently being provided by many research centers and institutes at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The objectives included:

- Increased service quality for faculty and staff
- Improved administrative support to administrative leaders
- Increased career opportunities and work balance for support staff
- Improved academic mission enabling greater investment through the reduction of administrative costs
- Appropriate allocation of resources to serve students and promote Carolina's mission

3.2. Metrics.

Previously, Huron Consulting Group partnered with The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to evaluate the institution's administrative operations. They specifically evaluated communications, finance, human resources, information technology, and research administration consideration of centralization and shared services. The approach taken included the evaluation of:

- People
- Business Processes
- Support Services
- Technology
- Performance Measurement and Continuous Improvement

3.3. Sources.

To conduct a full needs assessment, Huron partnered with the author to:

- Identify in-scope centers and institutes for the pilot
- Conduct kick-off meetings with each center and institute director to discuss the rationale
- Conduct interviews with key stakeholders including 4 center and institute directors, 12 center and institute leadership team members, and 14 staff members
- Reviewed administrative documents and data for each of the 4 centers and institutes
- Reviewed finance and research administration business practices

Information about each research center and institute was gathered. In addition, information about each individual in a research center and institute for shared services was gathered. The metrics collected for research administration's current state included:

- Center and Institute data
  - Workforce
  - Projects/Awards
  - Transactions
  - Finance and Budgeting
  - Active Sponsored Awards
- Individual data
  - Resume
  - Current role

- Pre-award experience
- Post-award experience
- Other duties

Similar metrics were used for this Capstone Project for the purposes of designing a shared services model for research administration.

3.4. Committees.

No official committees were used for this Capstone Project.

Chapter 4. Project Description

4.1. Discussion of project elements.

This Capstone Project is intended to describe the author's involvement in designing a shared service model for research administration among research centers and institutes within the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research. The shared service model was not a new concept to The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. This model was considered before The Blueprint for Next under an initiative called Carolina Service with consultation by Huron in Fall 2016 through Fall 2017. This initiative was later paused and ultimately terminated. However, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research decided to move forward with a pilot project in support of the University's strategic initiative under The Blueprint for Next, Optimize Operations. As such, this project will describe the design process for a shared service support infrastructure for research administration that can be implemented as a pilot for feasibility purposes.

Chapter 5. Methodology

5.1. Methodology Overview.

The design elements for this new support infrastructure are comprehensive. To transition to a shared service model that shifts away from a decentralized operational method would involve buy-in from the individuals impacted by this change. As such, the Vice Chancellor for Research kicked off this initiative during a monthly meeting with Center and Institute Directors. The Vice Chancellor for Research shared the rationale for the project in the context of a new service delivery model for research administration in support of the University's goal to become a leading global public research university in America and that the author would be leading this effort.

To design a shared service research administration support model, the development aspects for consideration include:

- Participant Identification
- Socialization
- Data Collection and Analysis
- Workshops

To design the shared service model, many meetings, workshops, correspondence, and other communication methods with various stakeholders were conducted. The project design and discussion will detail each development phase as an approach to implementing centralization of research administration support at the department level at the University.

5.2. Project Design and Discussion.

Prior to implementing a shared services pilot for determining how to deliver research administration support to the research Centers and Institutes efficiently and effectively, designing the methodology is the focus of this Capstone Project. The activities involved in the design phase included forming project teams, assessing current processes, and identifying needs by holding meetings with Center Directors, investigators, and current administrative staff. It also included collecting and analyzing data to design a new way of working, including staffing needed to support the new model. In addition, developing new models for research administrative support, including transition plans and training.

5.2.1. Participant Identification.

In designing the service delivery model, the author chose three Centers and one Institute to participate. These units would be involved in the design process for changing the service delivery model for most research administration activities to be centralized. The design process included the following research Centers and Institutes:

- The Howard W. Odum Institute for Research in Social Science
- Center for Developmental Science
- Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- Injury Prevention Research Center

These units were chosen due to recent turnover in research administration staff, undesirable financial audits, lack of documented processes and procedures, and smaller financial portfolios in comparison to other Centers and Institutes within the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research.

5.2.2. Socialization.

Initial communications began with a brief 30-minute discussion with the Directors of the Centers and Institute identified for participation. The individual meetings with Directors included discussions of the proposed plan and collected their feedback. As a follow up to the discussion with the Directors, the author shared the same information with staff pre-determined as having a role in research administration. The purpose of this meeting was to also discuss the proposed plan and collect their feedback.

5.2.3. Data Collection and Analysis.

To design the current service delivery model required many steps and phases to address as many deficiencies up front as possible. This was evident through a series of one-on-one standardized interviews with the Center and Institute Directors, twelve research team members, and twelve administrative staff members. The single interviews were held at the physical location of each unit. The interviews helped the author learn more about the current strengths and challenges of the day-to-day operations that involve research administration. The participants were invited to share their insights around research administration activities. The interviews were about 60 minutes in duration and notes were recorded for analysis purposes (Appendix 1).

Individual unit specific focus groups were conducted with administrative staff in each of the four Centers and Institutes that participate in research administration. Participants were selected based on the author's existing knowledge of their role within the unit. The single focus groups were held at the physical location of each unit. Like the one-on-one interviews with Directors and Investigators, the focus group helped us learn more about the current strengths and challenges of the day-to-day operations that involve research administration. The participants were invited to share their insights around research administration activities. The focus groups were about 90 minutes in duration and notes were recorded for analysis purposes (Appendix 2).

The next step in designing the shared service model was to conduct an activity survey of staff that play a role in activities that involved research administration. Due to a lack of visibility into overall staff activity and resource allocation across research administration, especially in distributed units, the author began with a data-driven organizational assessment to facilitate an accurate depiction of the current state. The author's prior position was in one of the participating Centers and Institutes, Injury Prevention Research Center. As such, the author was aware of the highly distributed service-delivery model, research administration leadership lacked visibility on overall allocation of staff time, strengths and gaps related to core research administration skill sets.

To address this need, the author leveraged data from a recent activity survey administered campus wide. The author was on the administering team for the Centers, Institutes, and Offices that report to the Vice Chancellor for Research. The survey was comprehensive and included research administration skills, activities, and effort as part of the survey that was completed by twenty-four administrative staff within the four participating units. The data collected from the survey specific to research administration included pre-award and post award administration. The pre-award section included effort assignment to areas for preparation and review of budgets, proposal submission assistance, research planning, and other pre-award activities. The post-award sections included effort assignment to areas for finance and accounting, sponsored awards administration and oversight and other post-award activities. Individual survey results were reviewed and validated by participant supervisors (Appendix 3).

The author queried existing University financial and research administration electronic systems to conduct the analysis for each Center and Institute regarding pre-award and post-award administration volume. The data collection and analysis examined several data points such as proposal submissions, sponsored research awards, and financial transaction volume. This analysis provided insight into workload volume for staffing purposes (Appendix 4).

5.2.4. Workshops.

The author gathered individuals from the four participating Centers and Institutes to participate in design team workshops. The half day workshops spanned six months and discussed and developed:

- Organizational Model
- Service Catalog
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Training
- Standard Operating Procedures
- Workflow Tool

The series of workshops helped redefine and redesign our current business processes. This level of engagement and partnership was necessary to develop buy-in from the staff, supporting units, and also alleviate anxiety. The author also included central office staff to obtain a full view of the process and validate the materials.

Participants on the design team workshops were to provide insight and recommendations on how these businesses processes should be redesigned for implementation of shared services for research administration. Participants provided subject matter expertise and unique considerations for their respective units. Not all design team participants were assigned to every process design meeting. Participants were asked to participate by category where they can best apply their subject matter expertise.

5.3. Discussion of Questionnaire.

A questionnaire was not used for this Capstone Project.

Chapter 6. Project Results

After six months of meetings and workshops, the shared services model was designed to capture the core components required to implement a pilot. Stakeholders from the OVCR, each Center and Institute and central offices provided feedback on the design elements. These components were finalized and described in project results sections below.

6.1. Project Result 1.

The activities in scope for the shared services model were divided by activity, pre-award and post-award. The services will be provided by staff in shared services. The identification of the activities in scope for the shared service model are directly related to the organizational model and staffing needs of the shared service model. At the same time, this would allow Directors to determine how to start thinking about reorganize their units for staff who had duties within and outside the scope of the service center who may not remain in the unit. The same information was shared with staff that currently have a research administration role to obtain input and feedback while also enabling them to work with unit leadership on restructuring their units (Appendix 5).

6.2. Project Result 2.

For design purposes for implementing a pilot, the chosen organizational model for centralization was the single model as seen in Appendix 6. Within this model, staff may be assigned portfolios in one or more centers and institutes due to the volume of work in each unit. This model will allow flexibility for both full cycle and specialization of research administration support services based on the skill-level of staff in the shared service model.

Utilizing the structure of larger Centers and Institutes within the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, a Research Administration Manager with several Research Administrators and Research Operators would be an ideal organizational structure. The Research Administration Manager would be a new position that would require recruitment. The other positions would be fulfilled by existing staff and the four participating Centers and Institutes.

The Research Administrator Manager will largely share the same responsibilities as Research Administrators with a portion of their time devoted to managing and developing members of team (25% Supervisor / 75% Investigator Support). He/she is responsible for day-to-day oversight of the team, and for providing a higher level of subject matter expertise than Research Administrators. He/she is also responsible for ensuring quality and adherence to standardized processes and procedures for the shared service model (Appendix 7).

The Research Administrator role is the primary contact to meet all of a PI's needs. Each Research Administrator were assigned a portfolio of PIs. The Research Administrator roles performs both pre-award and post-award activities. Pre-award supports the organization of proposal packets. This includes creating a budget, providing all support documentation, and ensuring that the proposal meets all criteria as outlined by the sponsor. Post-award is responsible for supporting Directors, Investigators in the management sponsored grants. This includes all transactions, document development, and monitoring related to grant compliance, state and federal reporting requirements, and budget management. Research Administrators will be knowledgeable in pre and post award to ensure that deliver comprehensive and end-to-end service (Appendix 7).

Operations team members will have limited direct PI interaction. They will largely be responsible for processing routine transactions that require minimal, if any, decision support. This role did provide a review of transactions for accuracy and completeness but not for authorization or approval due to internal controls. Responsible for identifying issues and ensuring escalation protocols to the research administrator, research administer lead, or service center manager (Appendix 7).

6.3. Project Result 3.

Roles and responsibilities were defined under two categories, pre-award and post-award. These activities were further defined and described in detail with roles and responsibilities specific to Principal Investigators, Shared Service, and the Office of Sponsored Research. The Office of Sponsored Research is a central office that serves as an agent of the University to provide checks and balances related to compliance of federal, state, and University policies and regulations. The activities under pre-award relate to proposal submission assistance. The activities under sponsored post-award are related to sponsored award administration and oversight and finance and accounting. The current state of units did not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, so this was important to develop along with the redesign process (Appendix 8).

6.4. Project Result 4.

The next phase in the design process workshops was training and development among staff. This process involved went hand in hand with developing the standardized operating procedures. Staff assessments were conducted by the Research Administration Manager who, with the author, identified the roles where staff should be placed. Training sessions were held 3 days per week as part of the development of standard operating procedures and other design aspects.

6.5. Project Result 5.

Another project aspect is the design of current business processes and procedures that relate to research administration. The three process design categories were proposal submission assistance, sponsored project administration, and sponsored project accounting (Appendix 9).

6.6. Project Result 6.

The author recognized the need for a tool to manage workflow within the service center to avoid requests and responsibilities slipping through the cracks. As such, the author requested and received a demonstration of two homegrown pre-existing customer facing web portals for submission of requests to the shared service model. Individuals from the design teams were part of the demonstrations and provided their feedback and input. It was decided that none of these options were suitable for our purposes. Fortunately, the author consulted with the Office of Research Information Systems (ORIS) which is under the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, for development of a workflow tool. The author provided requirements to ORIS and through a series of meetings and involvement from the Research Administration Manager and design team members, Rapid Administrative Service Request (RASR) was developed (Appendix 10).

6.7. Project Result 7.

The standards for the service center's performance will be grounded in Partnership and Service Level Agreements (SLA). These agreements will represent an agreed upon service expectation, for those receiving service and those providing service. As such, the design of the agreement outlined in Appendix 11 would:

- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Define the services and deliverables that will be provided and the performance standards that can be expected
- Provide an overview of mutual requirements and expectations for processes
- Communicate the expected value of the function (e.g. finance)
- Define how performance will be measured to mitigate future operational risk (e.g. capacity overload)

Chapter 7. Recommendations and Discussion

7.1. Introduction.

The design results described in Chapter 6 were essential components to implement a pilot for a shared service model for research administration. The author is confident that utilization of these new resources and tools will provide insight into a new operational method for research administration support.

7.2. Recommendations.

While it is important that the operational aspects for implementing the pilot have been developed, additional aspects are recommend for consideration prior to fully implementing the pilot. Those aspects include:

- Governance
- Space
- Cost Model
- Continuous Improvement

7.2.1. Recommendation 1: OVCR Should Establish a Governance Committee.

Partnership and collaboration will be a cornerstone for the customer service provided to the research Centers and Institutes. Appropriate governance is critical to maintain focus on the needs of Investigators and Directors, and to also provide remediation paths when expectations are not achieved. It is recommended that a Governance Committee be established and comprised of one individual from each of their respective units. The committee will be charged with developing multi-year operational and service-level goals.

7.2.2. Recommendation 2: OVCR Should Establish Dual Work Locations.

Space on campus is limited and most research centers and institutes are located off campus. To balance the need for staff to reside in the same location as their managers and peers while also having a physical presence in the units they support, it is recommended that staff split their time between locations. Administrative staff would have scheduled days with their pod and in the unit they support. To allow for flexibility, this schedule could be altered to support the needs of the individual and the unit.

7.2.3. Recommendation 3: OVCR Should Establish a Funding Model.

To further the integration of the support staff in the shared service model, the cost of these staff would be allocated away from their current reporting units. The method for billing for services would be based on an activity-based allocation. The approach to this option was to shift staff to new salary lines while leaving the budget in the participating unit and charge units for support provided. The participating units have a variety of funding mechanisms and to allow them to use their funds strategically, this was the preferred cost method.

7.2.4. Recommendation 4: OVCR Should Establish Performance Monitoring.

To continuously improve the shared services model, key performance indicators and other metrics should be assessed regularly. Examples should include performance through satisfaction surveys among staff and customers. Additionally, regular review of workload and error corrections through tracking of requests in RASR. Monitoring the overall increase in proposal submissions and awards by the supporting units supported by the shared services model. Lastly, improvement or expansion of existing tools, technology, and other resources to stay current in the field.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

The University's strategic plan, The Blueprint for Next, and the desire to be a leading global research university in America, the author of this Capstone Project is supportive of implementing a pilot for shared services in research administration. The design and implementation of a shared service center for research administration addresses the strategic plan element, Optimize Operations, to address administrative operations. The key operations design components for the organizational model, service catalog, roles and responsibilities, training, standard operating procedures, and workflow tool were designed to provide a consistent, efficient and effective shared services support model for research administration. By utilizing these aspects for pilot feasibility purposes is a move in the right direction to improve the antiquated administrative operations in support of the University's mission.

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Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Date: _______________ Unit: _______________ Role: _______________

Center/Institute Director/Research Team/Administrative Staff

Introductions

Describe the purpose of the interview.

Describe your role as it relates to research administration support.

____

____

Describe the strengths of research administration support.

____

____

Describe the challenges of research administration support.

____

____

Describe any gaps in research administration support.

____

____

Please provide additional information about research administration support.

____

____

____

Appendix 2: Focus Group Guide

Focus Group Guide

Date: _______________ Unit: _______________
Center/Institute

Introductions

Describe the purpose of the focus group.

Describe your role as it relates to research administration support.

____

____

Describe the strengths of research administration support.

____

____

Describe the challenges of research administration support.

____

____

Describe any gaps in research administration support.

____

____

Please provide additional information about research administration support.

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Appendix 3: Activity Survey Definitions

Activity Survey Definitions

Pre-Award Administration

Description: The following is the Activity Analysis taxonomy for the RESEARCH function at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Only numbered items below will receive effort level reporting in the activity survey.

Activity	Definition
1. Prepare and Review Budgets	
a. Prepare and Review Budgets	Assisting the PI in the development of a budget or a sub award budget, including effort, materials, etc.; including just in time budgets and administrative reductions; these are typically detailed, line-item budgets
b. Develop strategic budget plans with PIs	Working with PIs to strategize on budget development across multiple proposals
2. Proposal Submission Assistance	
a. Gather and write boiler plate information for proposals	Writing (or identifying existing) information on the University, specific Center, school, PI, etc.
b. Prepare proposals	Preparing the proposal for submission to any group or agency (including renewals and extensions)
c. Review proposals- compliance and format	Reviewing the proposal prior to sending to the funding agency/sponsor
d. Gather performance site demographics	Gathering and preparing supporting demographics for submission
e. Submit proposals to OSR	Submitting the proposal to OSR and complying with the award agency/sponsor to fulfill its requirements
f. Prepare personnel demographics for proposal submissions	Gathering key standard demographics for personnel, such as CVs
g. Assist with the collection of sub-awards	Collecting sub-award information
3. Research Planning	
a. Identify funding opportunities	Actively pursuing leads for funding opportunities
b. Write budget justifications	Preparing budget justifications for submission to sponsors

Activity	Definition
1. Prepare and Review Budgets	
c. Develop research strategies with PIs, including methodology refinement	Working with PIs to refine the research methodology and statistical plans to be applied to the research
e. Review and edit content for subject matter	Providing input and revision to the research content of the proposal
f. Identify strategic partners and collaborators	Work with PIs across the University to build collaborative efforts to jointly apply for funding
g. Develop relationships with external collaborators and subcontracts	Corresponding with external contractors and subcontractors on behalf of PI
h. Identify additional resources	Identifying sources of funds from the research center or other funds to support the PI's work. Resources can be related to specific personnel, equipment, etc.
4. Other Pre-Award Activities	

Finance: Research- Post-Award Administration
Description: The following is the Activity Analysis taxonomy for the distributed Post-Award Administration function at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Only numbered items below will receive effort level reporting in the activity survey.

Activity	**Definition**
1. Post-Award: Finance and Accounting	
a. Monitor budget balances	Monitoring the available balance in a grant account and keeping the researcher up to date so as to avoid overages
b. Process subcontractor invoices	Creating invoices for subcontractor arrangements and ensuring the amounts and details are appropriate; includes working with UNC OSR Contracts or Business Services to initiate the subcontract/BSA (provide scope of work, budget, sub awardee contact information; and, if needed, funding agency justification and approval)
c. Complete allowability review of purchases	Auditing purchases to confirm whether or not the items purchased were allowed on the award
d. Collect equipment/ property reports, etc.	Ensuring updated and appropriate records for research related property and equipment
e. Award milestones/timeline and documentation management	Staying abreast of key dates in award lifecycle, managing / retaining key financial documents
f. Manage PI transfer notifications to/from the University	Keeping abreast of PI transfers or other PI-related changes on sponsored awards; editing the award or account details as necessary
g. Generate monthly financial reports for PIs	Preparing financial reports which will aid the PI in avoiding overages and effort planning
h. Manage progress report due notifications	Informing the PI when progress reports are due; collecting progress reports, sending to OSR for signature and appropriately submitting report to the agency
i. Periodic report preparation (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and yearly) to report on variances	Preparing reports of financial information for various accounting periods
2. Post-Award: Sponsored Awards Administration and Oversight	
a. Setup awards/accounts	Establishing an account in the accounting system to track and record expenses against the grant

Activity	Definition
1. Post-Award: Finance and Accounting	
b. Assist with the collection of sub awardee commitments	Collecting intent to form a subcontract information
c. Support the collection of department approval of buyouts and cost-share commitments	Ensuring the agreements are in place for expected cost share and buyout (including requesting matching funds from RGS and departments)
d. Correspond with sponsoring agency	Contacting sponsoring agency for questions regarding the RFP - programmatic, methodological and technical
e. Create and maintain award files	Storing and documenting files and relevant information
f. Request award modifications and closeouts	Wrapping up the award on time; helping process changes to the award including interaction with OSR (OSR submits, approves, and executes)
g. Request no-cost extension request from OSR	Preparing no-cost extension requests to allow additional time for research
h. Prepare budget revisions	Preparing budget revisions for agencies which require prior approval or made under expanded authority provisional request (before notice of award and for noncompeting continuations)
i. Complete award renewal and/or extensions for non-competing awards	Applying for award renewal or extension
j. Request provisional accounts from UNC OSR	Requesting a temporary account in the event of a delayed award set up or other need, including the appropriate Dean or department approval
k. Collect cost share-payroll	Managing cost share for payroll expenses (including payroll forms)
l. Collect cost share- non payroll (including hard dollar match)	Managing cost share for non-payroll expenses; including submitting OSR reporting form with supporting documentation
m. Monitor cost share for satisfactory progress	Reporting on the certification of satisfactory progress
n. Coordinate effort reporting (distribution and collection)	

Activity	Definition
1. Post-Award: Finance and Accounting	
o. Prepare reports to sponsors	Ensuring effort is accurately and completely recorded; assisting the PI with monitoring effort to avoid non-compliance Preparing reports (status or financial) and submitting directly to sponsor
3. Other Post-Award: Activities	

Appendix 4: Center and Institute Sample Data Collection

Center and Institute Sample Data Collection

Workforce[1,2]	
Headcount	65
FTE	52
# of Proposal PIs	22
# of New Award PIs	13
# of Active Award PIs	24
Projects/Awards[2]	
# of Submitted Proposals	58
# of New Award PIs	42
# of Active Awards	113
Transactions[1]	
Purchases (Vouchers)	995
Travel Reimbursements	281
PAATs	>300
FYE Finance and Budgeting[1]	
Operating Expenditures	
Endowment	$0
Restricted	$7,357,000
Unrestricted	$666,000
Unrestricted – Proprietary	$0
Total	$8,023,000
Active Sponsored Awards[2]	
Budgeted	$33,100,000
Expenditures	$27,449,000
# of Projects Over Budget	13
Total Amount Over Budget	($158,000)

Data Sources

1. PeopleSoft
2. RAMSeS

Appendix 5: In Scope Activities

In Scope Activities

Pre-Award Activities

Proposal Submission Assistance

- New, non-competing continuation, supplement, and renewal applications
- Organization of proposal packet
- Proposal budget development
- Award notifications and updates

Post-Award Activities

Sponsored Award Oversight

- Award balance monitoring, including subawards
- Effort reporting
- Cost share agreements
- Burn rate, rate of spend, and forecasting
- Routine budget vs. expense reports

Sponsored Awards Administration

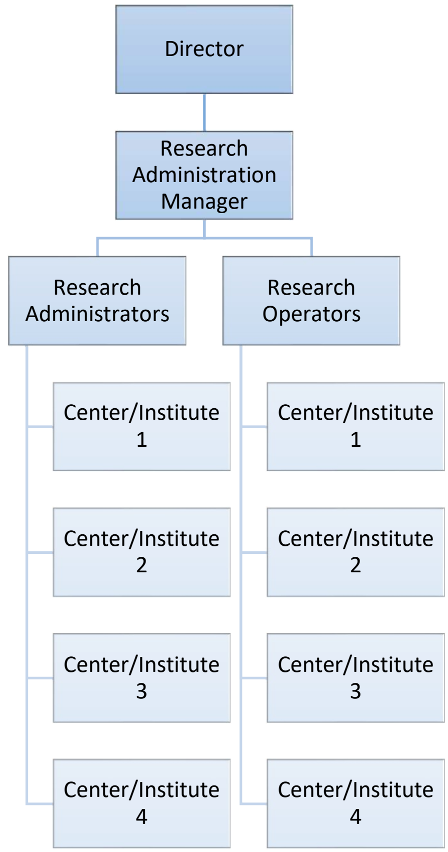
- Funding source setup, including subawards
- No cost extensions, budget revisions, prior approval, and other requests
- Award closeouts

Finance and Accounting

- Department purchases, invoices and reimbursements
- Travel support
- Salary source changes

Appendix 6: Organizational Model

Organizational Model



Appendix 7: Position Descriptions

Position Descriptions

Research Operations Specialist (Accounting Technician)

Primary purpose of this position
This position will provide oversight and support in the execution of routine transactional accounting and personnel functions for one or more Centers/Institutes. This support will include finance, post-award and payroll activities by independently reviewing and processing the various transaction types. This position will review effort certification statements for the supporting units. As such, this position will also act as a liaison with central offices. This position is responsible for ensuring all supporting documentation is stored electronically on OneDrive. As such, the position will evaluate program, policy, and rule changes to determine their impact on existing systems and to assure compliance with University requirements.
For overall compliance purposes, this position will examine expenditures for accordance with applicable University, state, federal and agency laws. This position will provide consultation, technical assistance, and coordination of expenses that utilize multiple funding sources. This position will identify risk and adverse issues generated in expense activities, present appropriate issues and recommend solutions to management. Professional technical knowledge in the area of sponsored research and other fund types will assure that goals and outcomes are provided with effective support.

Duties and responsibilities
Transactional accounting functions
Consistently performs or supervises transactional accounting functions in an accurate and timely manner while cautiously monitoring revenues and expenditures. Transactions are entered with correct Chartfield string and within 3 business days 90% of the time. Deposits completed with appropriate documentation within 1 business day.
Post-award and Non-Sponsored: will largely be responsible for processing routine transactions, approval to transactions for accuracy and completeness (not authorization). Responsible for identifying issues and ensuring escalation protocols to the research administrator, research administration manager, or service center director.

- Respond to requests from primary Center/Institute
- Department purchases and invoices
- Invoice payment and reimbursements (Vouchers)
- Travel support (provide CABS number, process advance and process reimbursement)
- Budget transfers and journals
- Vendor Requests
- pCard and imprest reconciliation
- Journal Entries
- Cash advance requests and reconciliation
- Purchase Requisitions, Receiving and VISP
- Accounts Receivable (ACH, Cash/Check/Credit Card, and Deposits)
- Disbursements (Wire, Imprest, and Petty Cash)
- Independent Contractor
- Funding Swaps and PAATs
- Invoicing (internal and external)
- Electronic File Storage
- Reconciliation/Billing (photocopies, CBM, Enterprise, and etc.)

Fund swap or retro payroll actions

- Complete fund swap or retro payroll actions within 5 business days of request.
- Complete personnel spreadsheet with fund swap or retro payroll for eCrt certifications.

Effort certification review

- Review 100% of ECRT report to ensure accuracy of payroll and sponsored funding by University pre-review deadline. Ensure 100% of ECRT reports are submitted, reconciled, and approved by University deadline.
- Perform original review, alert if problems, send notification do/do not certify, work with RA to answer questions and resolve potential issues. Keep track of departmental and none departmental certifications.

Other duties as assigned

Research Administrator (Business Services Coordinator)

Primary purpose of this position

This position will provide oversight and support in the execution of the budget and expense to a specific portfolio consisting of Principal Investigators and/or Center/Institute Directors. This support will include post-award and financial management of other fund types. This position will provide support for finance and post-award activities by independently reviewing and approving transactions, reconciling and reporting on various fund types, providing personnel and non-personnel projections, and acting as a liaison with central offices and sponsors. The total annual budget managed by this position will be up to $7.5 million with annual expenditures up to $2.5 million. This position will examine budgets and expenditures for compliance with applicable state, federal and agency laws. This position will provide consultation, technical assistance, and coordination of post-award and financial management processes that will utilize multiple funding sources. This position completes or evaluates methodologies used in the preparation of program spending forecasts and provides technical assistance to improve the accuracy of projections. The position will review program, policy, and rule changes to determine their fiscal and program impact and to assure compliance with state, federal and agency requirements. This position will identify risk and adverse issues generated in budget and program activities and present appropriate issues and suggest recommendations/solutions to management. Professional technical knowledge and analytical skills will assure that goals and outcomes are provided with effective support.

Duties and responsibilities

Post-award and non-sponsored finance and accounting management

- Respond to requests from supporting unit(s)
- Funding source setup (including setup Project Report in Excel, copy code, and etc...)
- Fund balance monitoring
- No cost extensions, budget revisions, prior approval, and carryover requests (in tandem with PI and/or supporting unit(s) Liaison)
- Award closeouts
- Monitoring Cost share agreements
- Burn rate, rate of spend, and budget forecasting
- Fund reconciliation (Ensure that all realized expenses and revenues are accurate, accrued to the correct Chartfield string, ensuring that all processed transactions were posted and that posted transactions are accurate, that all expected expenses and revenues have in fact been realized, and compliance with all terms and conditions of all funding sources.)
- Routine budget vs. expense reports
- Assist with eCrt review

Finance and human resource approvals/oversight

- Accounts Receivable and Payable Approvals/Oversight: Invoicing and payment is in compliance with contract terms. Initial allowability review for all transaction types. Review expenses for allowability; prepare budget revisions if necessary.
- Finance Approvals/Oversight: Review financial transactions in worklist daily and approve or reject as appropriate. Act as financial steward for the department, ensuring transactions align with policy, and use appropriate Chartfield strings
- HR Approvals/Oversight: Review personnel actions on a timely basis and approve or recycle as appropriate, ensuring funding policies are being followed where necessary. Ensure worklist is emptied daily so as not to hinder Center-wide progress

Research administration service center development

- Assist Research Administration Manager and other RASC members in developing tools, policies, and procedures to ensure the success of the RASC. Attend Team Meetings as representative of the Pilot group to assist in process development and overall RASC design.

Other duties as assigned

Research Administrator (Budget Analyst)

Primary purpose of this position

This position will provide oversight and support in the execution of the budget and expense to a specific portfolio consisting of Principal Investigators and/or Center/Institute Directors. This support will include pre-award, post-award and financial management of other fund types. On the pre-award side, this position will work with research teams to develop proposal budgets, work with subcontractors to develop their budgets and other materials, complete applications such as CAYUSE and PHS forms, process RAMSeS Internal Processing Form for institutional routing and liaison with OSR. This position will provide support for finance and post-award activities by independently reviewing and approving transactions, reconciling and reporting on various fund types, providing personnel and non-personnel projections, and acting as a liaison with central offices and sponsors. The total annual budget managed by this position will be in the range of $7.5-15 million with annual expenditures in the range of $2.5-$5 million. This position will examine budgets and expenditures for compliance with applicable state, federal and agency laws. This position will provide consultation, technical assistance, and coordination in the preparation and execution of the initial, continuation, operating, and expansion budgets through pre-award and post-award processes that will utilize multiple funding sources. This position completes or evaluates methodologies used in the preparation of proposal budgets and/or program spending forecasts and provides technical assistance to improve the accuracy of projections. The position will evaluate program, policy, and rule changes to determine their fiscal and program impact and to assure compliance with state, federal and agency requirements. The position is responsible for the coordination and evaluation of state, federal and agency required reports to ensure that they meet their respective requirements. The position may review and approve contract recommendations to assure that contracts are consistent with state, federal, and agency guidelines. This position will identify risk and adverse issues generated in budget and program activities, present appropriate issues and recommend solutions to management. Professional technical knowledge and analytical skills will assure that goals and outcomes are provided with effective support.

Duties and responsibilities

Pre-award management

- Respond to requests from supporting unit(s) for proposal submission assistance
- Review funding solicitation for Service Center applicable components
- Work with PI and/or Center Liaison to meet Service Center, Institutional and Sponsor deadlines (primary center supporting unit(s))
- Organization of proposal packet using Service Center and PI responsible aspects
- Assistance with proposal preparation for routing for institutional approval
- Proposal budget development in partnership with PI and/or Center Liaison
- Award notifications and updates to PI and/or Center Liaison and OSR

Post-award and non-sponsored finance and accounting management

- Respond to requests from supporting unit(s)
- Funding source setup (including setup Project Report in Excel, copy code, and etc...)
- Fund balance monitoring
- No cost extensions, budget revisions, prior approval, and carryover requests (in tandem with PI and/or supporting unit(s) Liaison)
- Award closeouts
- Monitoring Cost share agreements
- Burn rate, rate of spend, and budget forecasting

- Fund reconciliation (Ensure that all realized expenses and revenues are accurate, accrued to the correct Chartfield string, ensuring that all processed transactions were posted and that posted transactions are accurate, that all expected expenses and revenues have in fact been realized, and compliance with all terms and conditions of all funding sources.)
- Routine budget vs. expense reports
- Assist with eCrt review

Finance and human resource approvals/oversight

- Accounts Receivable and Payable Approvals/Oversight: Invoicing and payment is in compliance with contract terms. Initial allowability review for all transaction types. Review expenses for allowability; prepare budget revisions if necessary.
- Finance Approvals/Oversight: Review financial transactions in worklist daily and approve or reject as appropriate. Act as financial steward for the department, ensuring transactions align with policy, and use appropriate Chartfield strings.
- HR Approvals/Oversight: Review personnel actions on a timely basis and approve or recycle as appropriate, ensuring funding policies are being followed where necessary. Ensure worklist is emptied daily so as not to hinder Center-wide progress.

Training, mentoring and supervision

- Provide training and supervision to Work-Study student(s). Communicate unit goals and objectives, and clear direction regarding assigned duties. Provide candid, timely, and constructive feedback on performance and behavior applying corrective action when appropriate. Attend to Work-Study Students development.

Other duties as assigned

Research Administration Manager (Business Officer)

Primary purpose of this position

This position has responsibility for managing and providing direction, guidance, and leadership for the day-to-day fiscal management and research administration activities of 3-4 Centers and Institutes that report to the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research. This position will oversee a financial support team comprised of at least 7.00 FTE. This position and its staff must be highly responsive to the Centers and Institutes that it serves but also a variety of organizations external to the University. The Business Officer is the hub of a complex network that must be highly flexible and respond rapidly, and without error, in fulfilling opportunities for research funding, in providing accurate and timely financial reports and projections, and in completing the financial obligations for sponsored projects.

Currently, the total cumulative operating expenses for the Centers and Institutes for this team is over $33M which includes both non-sponsored and sponsored research funds. The Business Officer will work with Center and Institute Directors, Principal Investigators, Deputy Directors, Project Managers and other research collaborators and Center and Institute staff to coordinate the fiscal and research program agendas as defined by each individual Center and Institute and their respective project teams or responsible individual for the source of funds.

The Business Officer will be the primary source of training and instruction to various levels of support staff in addition to participating sites for the research proposals, projects, and other non-sponsored financial aspects. The Business Officer will be the subject matter expert for pre-award and post-award business processes and will be familiar with a variety of funding sources and mechanisms. Must be able to advise subrecipients on policies and procedures for developing and administering contracts and grants. He/she will also assist with conducting training and instructions for this group of participating sites to ensure compliance with the new sub recipient monitoring guidance from the Office of Budget and Management.

The Business Officer will participate in financial protocol development, policies and procedures, pre-audit procedures and protocol adherence as it relates directly to the obligations of the various Centers and Institutes. The Business Officer will assist with providing technical assistance to collaborating institutions; participate in strategic decision making and constituency communications activities. This involves analyses of staffing, equipment implications, and time/cost allocations. This will also require the Business Officer to be aware of research issues and schedules, particularly primary data collection efforts nationally and internationally, data management and analysis techniques that have financial implications for the provision of support services to researchers. This position must ensure that all work has a high level of accuracy. Errors resulting in failure to exercise required accuracy would have a financial impact on offices and centers ability to make informed funding and budgeting decisions.

As a result, the Business Officer will not only oversee the various pre-award, post-award, and financial activities, they will play an active role in these functions to provide support to the staff and the units within the Service Center.

Duties and responsibilities

Pre-award management

- Responsible for compliance with all terms and conditions for all fund types and for establishing and supervisory oversight of both pre- and post-award sponsored projects administration and non-sponsored fund administration. This includes preparing and packaging proposals, cost-estimating, budgeting, accounting, and reporting systems that include program operations at the University and all participating sites and subcontractors. The Business Officer works with the Director for Financial Services to establish and implement processes, procedures and policies as needed.

- Reviews and negotiates contracts, notice of awards, memorandums of understanding, letters of agreement, task orders, and purchase orders for departmental purposes. Develops and generates various financial and written progress reports based on various funding agencies.

Post-award and non-sponsored finance and accounting management

- The Business Officer works with the Director for Financial Services to establish and implement processes, procedures and policies as needed.
- Develops and generates various financial and written progress reports based on various funding agencies. Reviews and approves financial reports and other transactions prepared by staff that report to this position.

Personnel management

- Oversees personnel activities from support staff who prepare and process personnel actions for both SHRA and EHRA permanent and temporary employees within and affiliated with the Centers and Institutes.
- This position has responsibility for hiring and assessing performance of the support staff including reviews and effectively communicating office policies and work plans to staff. He/she provides both positive feedback as well as corrective actions. The manager will regularly evaluate work assignments, provide work plans and follow University policies in work planning and performance evaluation. Provide staff with the necessary tools and training to accomplish principle functions and implement processes and procedures to maximize the abilities of each team member for maximum efficiency and productivity. The work overseen includes invoice payments, reimbursements, procurement, salary distribution changes, stipend payments, pre- and post-doctoral graduate research assistant tuition and health insurance payments, and consultant payments. This also includes salary planning and effort certification processes.
- He/She is responsible for overseeing projecting salary support for faculty and staff that reflect both awarded and under review funding sources in addition to non-sponsored sources of funding. These activities also involve having a thorough knowledge of the many fund types available to support a position to assist with paying for each employee’s salary commitment.

Training, education, supervision and protocol development

- Participating in protocol development, policies and procedures, pre-audit procedures and protocol adherence as it relates directly to the obligations of the numerous fund types. Provide subject matter expertise and day to day supervision to support staff. Provide technical assistance to collaborating institutions, organizations and agencies; assisting in the preparation of materials and findings for dissemination; and participating in strategic decision making and constituency communication activities.

Other duties as assigned

- Serve as a backup to the other Business Officers in their absence, provide backup to the support staff as needed and perform other duties as needed.

Appendix 8: Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities

Proposal Submission Assistance			
Activities	**PI Responsibility**	**Service Center Responsibility**	**Office of Sponsored Research Responsibility**
Proposal Submission Assistance: • Organization of proposal packet • New, non competing continuation , supplement, and renewal applications • Proposal budget development • Award notifications and updates	• Communicate need for proposal assistance • Identification of funding opportunity • Develop technical proposal • Provide details on effort and materials required for proposal packet definition • Review award terms and conditions	• Gather and write boiler plate information for proposal (specific to the University, Center, and/or PI) • Prepare proposal packet for compliance and format • Gather and input subcontract required information • Submit proposal packets to OSR • Prepare personnel demographic and applicable documentation • Assist PI in developing budget, budget justification and including cost share requirements and F&A waivers as applicable • Request financials guarantee	• Provide quality assurance for proposal packet prior to submitting to group or agency • Submit proposals to agencies • Signoff on all budgets • Ensure all compliance standards are met • Alert service center and PI of award • Approve financial guarantee accounts • Notify PI and Service Center of award setup; provides chartfield and Project ID(s) • Negotiate non-standard terms and conditions during award setup • Advise the PI on terms and conditions of award

Sponsored Award Administration and Oversight			
Activities	**PI Responsibility**	**Service Center Responsibility**	**Office of Sponsored Research Responsibility**
Sponsored Award Administration and Oversight: • Funding source setup • Award balance monitoring • Effort reporting • No cost extensions, budget revisions, prior approval, and request • Award closeouts • Cost share agreements • Burn rate, rate of spend, and forecasting • Routine budget vs. expense reports	• Prepare no cost extension justifications • Provide rationale for rebudget requests as necessary • Provide justification other sponsor prior approval request • Review monthly reports for accuracy • Ensure and confirm satisfactory subcontract progress is being made • Review and approve effort certifications • Prepare all technical reports required by the sponsor	• Submit no cost extension requests to OSR • Monitor burn rates • Generate and review monthly financial reports • Ensure cost share commitments are fulfilled • Monitor and track all cost share commitments • Partner with PI's to distribute/track effort reporting and certification • Ensure all appropriate expenditures and cost transfers are posted in preparation of closeout	• Create/Implement formal subcontractor plans • Create effort certifications • Submit official agency notifications regarding relinquishments, PI changes, or changes in PI effort • Notify PI and Service Center of project end at 90, 45, and 7 days out (automated process); process no cost extensions if required • Issue and distribute revised budget summaries • Process all award modifications and budget adjustment requests • Process cost transfers • Submit final financial report and invoice to agency • Process closeouts • Change project status to closed
Finance and Accounting: • Department purchases and invoices • Invoices and process reimbursements • Travel support	• Communicate purchase and hire needs to service center • Notify service center of changes in workforce • Approve subaward invoices	• Facilitate all personnel actions required by the PI • Initial allowability review for all travel and expense transaction types • Review expenses for allowability; prepare cost	• Final allowability review • Approve delegation of authority • Review and approve all personnel actions (ePARs) • Perform pre and post audit

Sponsored Award Administration and Oversight			
Activities	**PI Responsibility**	**Service Center Responsibility**	**Office of Sponsored Research Responsibility**
		transfers if necessary • Serve as approval delegate on behalf of PI (if applicable) • Complete appropriate vouchers and journal entries to process transactions (e.g. cost transfers) • Initiate and complete fund swap or retro payroll actions	reviews on allowability and allocability of expenses • Review and approve journal entries and cost transfers • Issue subcontracts on all sponsored projects

Appendix 9: Business Processes and Templates

Proposal Submission Process

☐ PI/Project Staff notifies RASC of intent to submit proposal via RASR

☐ RA reviews RASR request and solicitation

☐ Organizational COI initiated by RA, if applicable

☐ RA develops submission checklist

☐ RA contacts PI/Project Staff to set up kick-off meeting

☐ Meeting is held (in-person or virtually)

- Review Checklist
- Discuss internal and external deadlines
- Discuss submission materials, requirements, guidelines, restrictions, etc.

☐ PI sends RA budgetary information (List of personnel, including % effort or hours, and non-personnel items) *This can occur before or after kick-off meeting.

☐ RA develops draft budget and sends to PI for review

☐ RA and PI work to finalize the budget

☐ RA develops draft budget justification and sends to PI for edits, if necessary

☐ RA sends budget, budget justification and SOW (at minimum) to RASC team for peer review and then items are routed to OSR

☐ RA initiates LOI and other business components

☐ PI works on technical components

☐ PI sends technical components to RA to assemble (technical pieces can be sent to RA as they are completed)

☐ RA assembles application package

☐ Full package is peer reviewed by RASC team

☐ Any necessary edits are made (RA handles budgetary edits and PI/Project Staff handle technical edits)

☐ Full package is sent to OSR via RAMSeS for final review/approval

☐ PI, RA or OSR submits to agency/prime

RA = Research Administrator
PI = Principal Investigator
RASC = Research Administration Service Center
OSR = Office of Sponsored Research

Reporting and Reconciling Process

This instructional manual is designed to assist RASC Research Administrators with performing the reconciliation and forecasting of the Monthly Financial Reports.

The purpose of the financial reports is to evaluate current and future fiscal conditions to guide budgetary and programmatic decisions. The monthly reports provide researchers and Center/Institute leadership with an accurate, comprehensive view of the status of project and department funds.

Monthly **reconciliation** is a key internal control that compares the transactions posted to source documents to:

- Determine if transactions are complete or outstanding
- Confirm accuracy of the transactions
- Identify any erroneous transactions that need to be corrected

While reconciling – remember the following three questions:

- Do I recognize all the charges posted this month?
- Are the charges allowable, allocable and reasonable?
- Do I see any anomalies?

The purpose of **forecasting** is to predict future balances at the end of an award or account based on historical spending trends and projected future spending trends. Researchers and Leadership rely on:

- Up-to-date forecasts
- Clear and transparent information

Beginning The Reconciliation

1. Copy the Monthly Report worksheet from the previous month and paste it in the current monthly folder labeled “YYYY MM MONTH” (e.g. 2020 04 April).

2. Update the file name to the current year and month being reconciled “projectID Report **YYYY-MM**” (e.g. 5107779 Report **2020-03**)

Summary Tab

1. In the Summary tab, update the Reconciling Period start and end dates to the current reporting period.

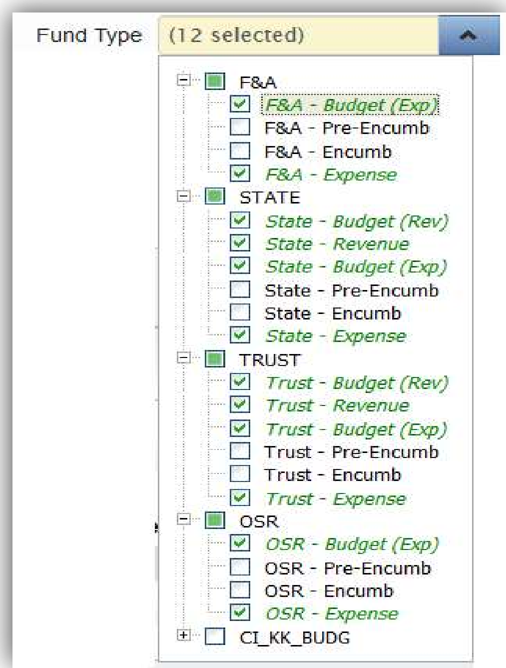
    a. If you are reconciling department funds, you may have multiple Summary tabs to reflect information by Program Codes. Update the dates in all available Summary tabs.

PROJECT REPORT - SUMMARY

PI :	Kristen Brookshire						F&A Rate:	52.0%
PROJECT ID :	5107779						Award Term Description	
TITLE :	DTFH6115R00010: Technical Support for Highway Safety						Encumber Indirect:	Yes
BUDGET START :	6/1/2018			PROJECT START:	6/2/2017		Indirect Type:	MTDC
BUDGET END :	5/31/2019	<= Forecast Thru		PROJECT END:	5/31/2019		Progress Report	1/15/2021
RECONCILING PERIOD :	3/1/2019	3/31/2019					Financial Report	3/6/2021
SPONSOR :	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, (VHB) Inc.			SPONSOR NO:	38541-15		Day to Request Bud. Rev/Prior Approval	
							Auto Carryforward	
							Closeout Submitted	

Infoporte Transaction Tab

1. Download the Infoporte Transactions for your project or department funds:
   a. **OSR**: Select OSR - Budget (Exp) and OSR - Expense fund types.
   b. **F&A**: Select F&A - Budget (Exp) and F&A - Expense fund types.
   c. **State**: Select State - Budget (Rev), State - Revenue, State – Budget (Exp) and State - Expense fund types.
   d. **Trust**: Select Trust - Budget (Rev), Trust - Revenue, Trust – Budget (Exp) and Trust - Expense fund types.



2. Choose the current Fiscal Year and the Accounting Period for the month that has officially closed.

3. For Sponsored Projects, enter in the Project ID.

4. For Non-Sponsored funds, enter the fund and/or source.

5. Enter the appropriate Department ID.

6. Click search.

7. Download data in Excel.

8. Makes sure the column A header in the downloaded excel worksheet corresponds to the column A header in the Infoporte Transactions tab.

    a. If the column headers do not match, you may need to delete column A from the downloaded excel worksheet before transferring the data.

9. Highlight Row 2 and press **Ctrl+Shift+↓** (this will select all data from row 2 to the last row of available data).

10. Copy the data and paste in the Infoporte Transactions tab.

    a. Clear any filter and sorting settings before pasting the new data.

    b. Do not delete the previous months data.

    c. The data from the Infoporte Transactions tab will automatically populate in the Summary tab.

11. Close the excel sheet that was downloaded from Infoporte.

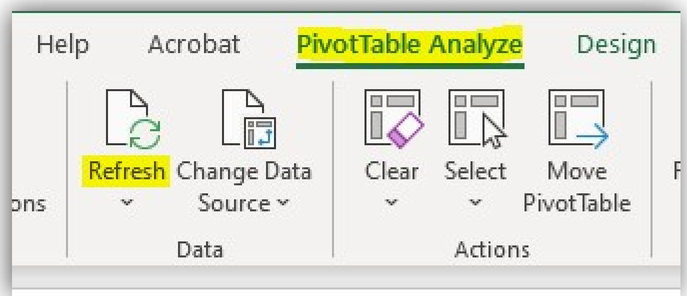
Refreshing or Adding Pivot Table

A pivot table allows you to extract the significance from a large, detailed data set.

For **existing** pivot tables:

1. Click anywhere on the pivot table

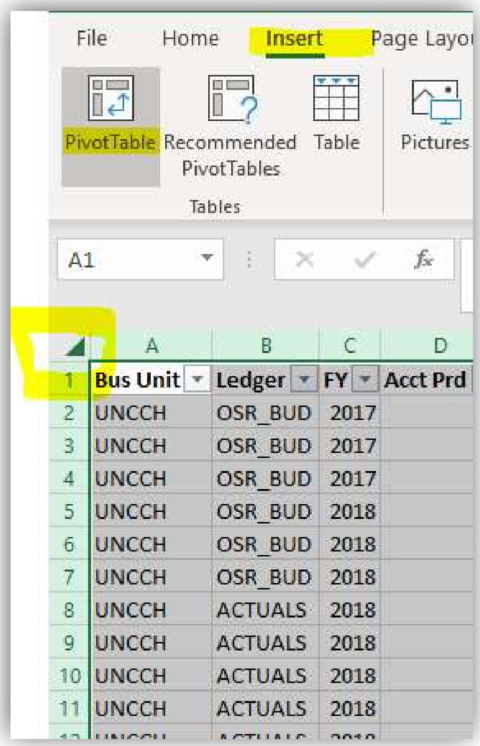
2. On the PivotTable Analyze tab, click the Refresh button arrow, and then click Refresh All.
    a. This will update the pivot table with the new data.



To create a **new** pivot table:

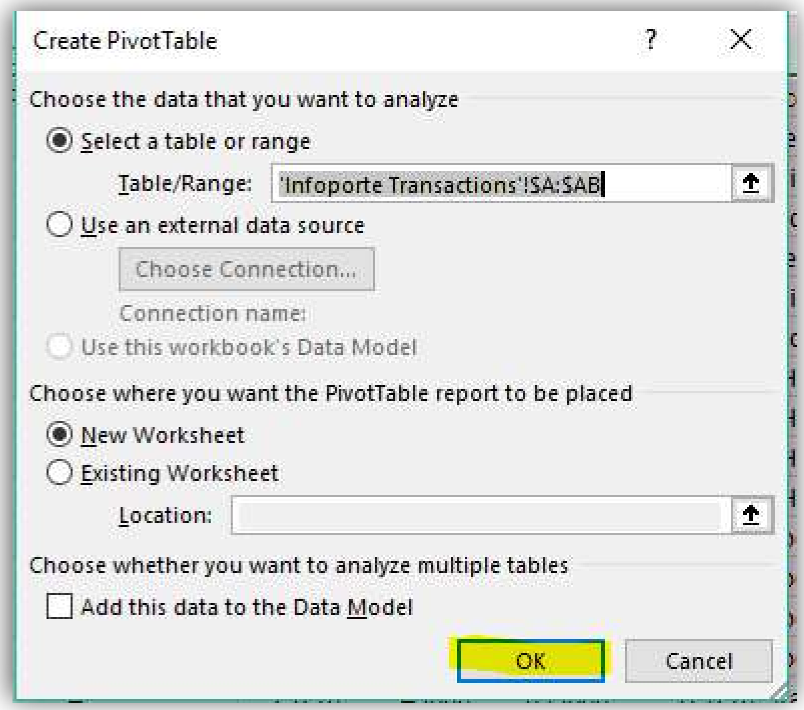
1. In the Infoporte Transactions tab, click the top left corner of the worksheet, which will select all cells.

2. From there, select Insert and click on Pivot Tables.

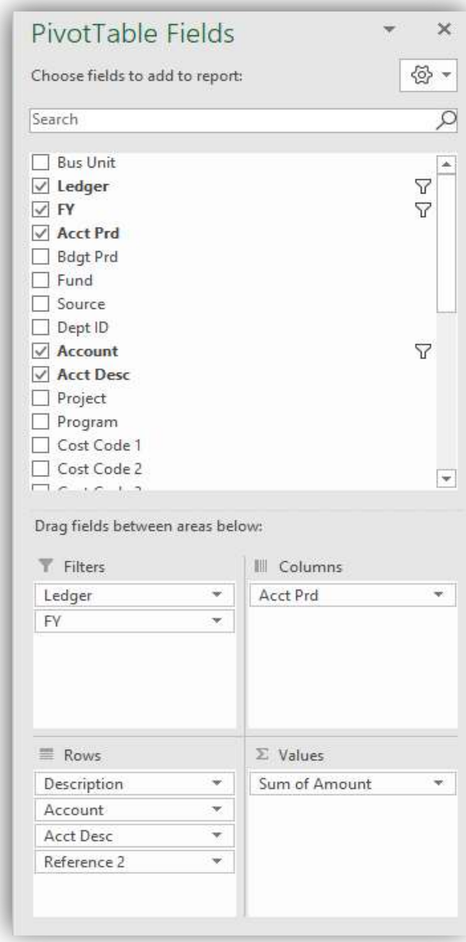


3. A window titled “Create Pivot Table” will appear.

4. Click OK.



5. Build your salary pivot table as follows:



TIPS:

- For salaries, select all account codes in the range of 500100-514999, excluding 512510.
- You can right click on pivot table rows and columns to remove subtotals, sort data, expand/collapse rows.
- Under Reference 2: **PAY** =Regular Pay and **PAT** = PAAT's (retroactive adjustments)
- **Training**: *UNC Excel Training for Finance and Operations*

Personnel Forecasting Tab

Adding Personnel:

1. Add the personnel that will be charged to the project/fund source. The information can be found in the project budget or on the salary tracking tool.

2. Select the correct Fringe Benefits by using the populated information in rows 2-13. (e.g. for a Non-Faculty staff, copy row 3 and paste in an empty row below row 13).

3. Update the following cells:
   a. Column A (name)
   b. Columns Q-S (longevity), if applicable
   c. Columns AC-AF (program and cost codes), if applicable
   d. Column AG (total capped salary). If there is no salary cap, enter the IBS
   e. Column AH (IBS), includes supplements. For staff with reduced FTE's, convert salary to a 1 FTE
   f. Column AJ (start date) = this tab is for forecasted salaries, so start date should be after the month of reconciliation
   g. Column AK (end date) = date the staff member will come off the funding source
   h. Column AL (FTE) = FTE (% effort) to be charged

4. Hide the following columns:
   a. Rows 2-13
   b. Columns E-Z
   c. Columns AC-AF, if none
   d. Column AM
   e. Columns AR-BF

5. Additional personnel lines are required if there is a change to a person's FTE (% effort) or if there is a change to their base salary. You will need to copy the original personnel line and paste it in the next row. You can then update FTE, start/end dates and/or base salary.

Updating Personnel Forecasts:

1. As you reconcile, verify that the Biweekly/Monthly Rate amount in the personnel forecasting tab matches the Salary Pivot Table amount for the period being reconciled.

2. If the amounts match, you can change the start date to reflect the next pay period that will post the following month.

3. If the end date listed is for the current reconciliation period, you can zero out the FTE cell or delete the row entirely.

Name	Notes	Employee Type	Pay Cycle	Project	Account	Total (Capped) Salary	Institutional Base Salary	Project Rate	Start Date	End Date	FTE	Biweekly / Monthly Rate	Forecast Salary	Forecast Fringes	Forecast Salary + Forecast Fringes
Jane Doe	PI	EHRA	M		511120	197,300	332,500	29,595	1/1/20	3/31/20	15.00%	2,466.25	7,398.75	1,712.43	9,111.18
Jane Doe	PI	EHRA	M		511120	197,300	332,500	19,730	4/1/20	6/30/20	10.00%	1,644.17	4,932.50	1,140.01	6,072.51
Jane Doe	PI	EHRA	M		511120	197,300	332,500	39,460	7/1/20	12/31/20	20.00%	3,288.33	19,730.00	4,566.52	24,296.52
John Smith	Co-I	EHRA	M		511120	194,000	194,000	19,400	1/1/20	4/30/20	10.00%	1,616.67	6,466.67	1,918.52	8,385.19
John Smith	Co-I	EHRA	M		511120	197,300	213,400	19,730	5/1/20	12/31/20	10.00%	1,644.17	13,153.33	3,791.61	16,944.94
TBD	Res. Admin	SHRA	B		512120	61,000	61,000	3,050	3/30/20	6/30/20	5.00%	116.41	779.96	321.31	1,101.27
TBD	Res. Admin	SHRA	B		512120	62,830	62,830	3,142	7/1/20	12/31/20	5.00%	119.90	1,582.74	649.68	2,232.42

6. If the amounts do not match, a retroactive adjustment (PAAT) may be required.

    a. Copy the line from the Forecasting section and paste it in the Retroactive Adjustment section (starting in row 40).

    b. Update the start and end dates, if necessary and reflect the adjustment needed (increase or decrease) in the FTE column.

Retroactive Adjustments															
Jane Doe	PI	EHRA	M		511120	197,300	332,500	(29,595)	7/1/19	12/31/20	-15.00%	(2,466.25)	(44,392.50)	(10,274.62)	(54,667.12)
John Smith	Co-I	EHRA	M		511120	194,000	194,000	(2,037)	12/1/20	12/31/20	-1.05%	(169.75)	(169.75)	(50.36)	(220.11)
TBD	Res. Admin	SHRA	B		512120	61,000	61,000	1,220	2/3/20	2/16/20	2.00%	46.56	46.56	19.33	65.89

TIPS:

- Double check to ensure the start dates were updated to reflect the pay periods that will post in the following reporting period.
- The start date should not fall after the end date.
- When reconciling the first or second month of a project, compare the fringe benefits in the Infoporte Transactions tab to the fringe benefits selected in the Personnel Forecasting tab (columns E-Z) to make sure the correct fringe types were selected.
- The amount an employee pays for health insurance depends on their selected plan level. Therefore, there may be a difference between the projected fringe benefits and the actual fringe benefits.
- For SHRA employees, utilize the Biweekly Pay Schedule to determine the start and end dates of forecasted pay and retroactive adjustments.
- For Center and Institute personnel, make sure the Personnel Forecasting tab and the Salary Expense Projection (SEP) tool amounts match.

Non-Personnel Forecasting Tab

1. RA lists non-personnel encumbrances/forecasting (e.g. vouchers, travel, CBM transactions, pcard, JE's, estimates/encumbrances provided by PI).

2. Required fields:
    a. Account
    b. Amount
    c. Program and/or Cost Code(s), if applicable
    d. **<u>It is highly recommended that the date, reference, description, and note fields are completed.</u>**

3. As you approve transactions in RASR and/or ConnectCarolina, be sure to post the transaction in your project Non-Personnel tab.

4. During reconciliation, verify the amount has posted to Infoporte and move the amount from Column M to Column P (cleared).

5. Transfer the backup documentation from the To Be Reconciled folder to the monthly Non-Personnel folder.

    a. If you are unable to find the backup documentation, notify the Research Operator.

Budget Forecasting Tab

1. Post expected revenue, budget revisions or budget increases/decreases.

2. Required fields:
    a. Account
    b. Amount
    c. Program and/or Cost Code(s), if applicable
    d. **It is highly recommended that the date, reference, description, and note fields are completed.**

3. During reconciliation, verify the amount has posted to Infoporte and move the amount from Column M to Column P (cleared).

TIPS:

- For revenue (account codes beginning with “4”), check that budget was updated to match the revenue received. This is known as Automatic Budget Create (ABC):
    - Revenue transaction entered (deposit, data collect, batch, etc.)
    - Transaction hits recognized ledger
    - Automated process runs nightly to check for new transactions in the Recognized ledger
    - Expense budget journals created for sources with associated budget

- If budget is not automatically created, a manual budget journal may be required.

- If funds are uploaded by OSR in a restricted account code (568795), you will need to back out indirects so that it is not reflected as a direct cost. This can be done in the budget forecasting tab.

Subcontract Tab

1. You should have one Subcontract tab for each subcontractor associated with your project

2. For each subcontract, enter the Project ID, subcontractor name, starting balance (direct cost budget)

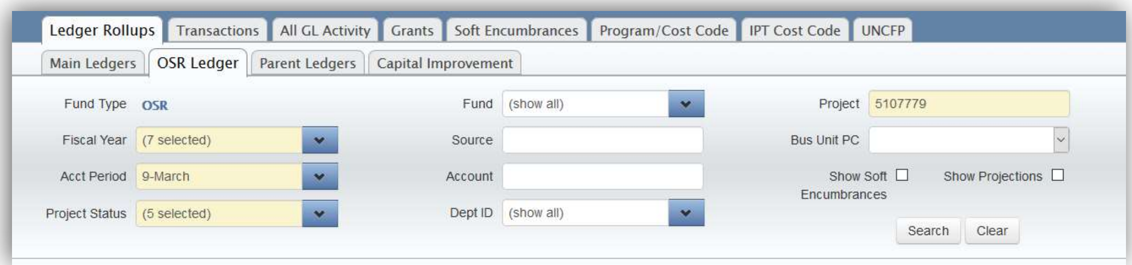
3. As invoices come in, enter invoice period, invoice number and invoice amount

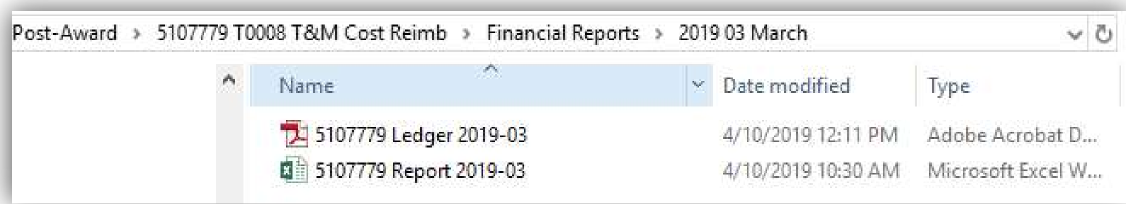
4. Subcontractor information is reflected in the Summary Tab starting on row 80

    a. If there are multiple subcontracts, update the Summary tab to include a row for each.

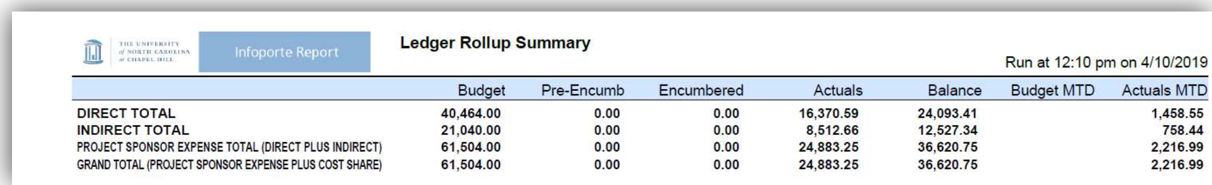
Infoporte Ledger

1. Save a copy of the pdf'd monthly Ledger for each project ID (main and subawards) or source in the Financial Report folder, along with the excel report.





2. Verify that the Budget and Actual amounts on the Ledger Report match the Budget and Actuals LTD columns in the monthly financial report.


Infoporte Report

Ledger Rollup Summary

Run at 12:10 pm on 4/10/2019

	Budget	Pre-Encumb	Encumbered	Actuals	Balance	Budget MTD	Actuals MTD
DIRECT TOTAL	40,464.00	0.00	0.00	16,370.59	24,093.41		1,458.55
INDIRECT TOTAL	21,040.00	0.00	0.00	8,512.66	12,527.34		758.44
PROJECT SPONSOR EXPENSE TOTAL (DIRECT PLUS INDIRECT)	61,504.00	0.00	0.00	24,883.25	36,620.75		2,216.99
GRAND TOTAL (PROJECT SPONSOR EXPENSE PLUS COST SHARE)	61,504.00	0.00	0.00	24,883.25	36,620.75		2,216.99

TIPS:

- Review the Ledger Report for incorrect charges and chartfield strings.
  - The correct chartfield string is the one with associated budget.
- Ensure your projects and/or funding source do not end in deficit.

Supporting Documentation

1. Transfer the backup documentation for budget and non-personnel transactions from the RO's "To Be Reconciled" folder to your financial Non-Personnel Document folder.

    a. Files are saved by month

    b. Subaward files should also be saved in this folder

    c. Reach out to the RO if you are unable to find the backup documentation

2. The RA is responsible for saving personnel backup documentation in the Personnel Action folder for their assigned financials.

Checklist

Beginning The Reconciliation

- ☐ Copy previous monthly reconciliation report and paste in the current monthly reporting folder
- ☐ Change the file name to the current reporting period (e.g. 5107779 Report 2020-03)

Reconciling

Summary Tab

- ☐ Update reconciling period start and end dates in Summary tab(s)

Infoporte Transactions Tab

- ☐ Download transactions for the current reconciling period from Infoporte and paste into the Infoporte Transactions tab

Budget Tab

- ☐ Verify that any budget changes (increases/decreases) and/or revenue posted correctly

Pivot Table

- ☐ Refresh pivot table(s) so that it reflects current information

Personnel Tab

- ☐ Verify that all personnel actions (ePar's and PAAT's) posted correctly
- ☐ Enter all necessary adjustments in the Retroactive Adjustment section
- ☐ Update the dates to reflect charges that will post in future periods

Non-Personnel Tab

- ☐ Verify all non-personnel transactions posted correctly and are allowable

Subaward Tab

- ☐ Verify the subaward invoices posted

Ledger Report

- ☐ Download, save and review the monthly ledger report
- ☐ Verify the budget and actual amounts on the ledger match the amounts in the summary tab

Forecasting

- ☐ Post all personnel actions and non-personnel transactions as you approve them in RASR and/or ConnectCarolina
- ☐ Include reference information
- ☐ Provide clear and transparent notes for all transactions
- ☐ Keep the salary tracking information up to date

Backup Documentation

- ☐ Transfer Non-Personnel documentation from the "To Be Reconciled" folder to financial Non-Personnel folder each month
- ☐ Save Personnel actions in the Personnel Actions folder as you approve

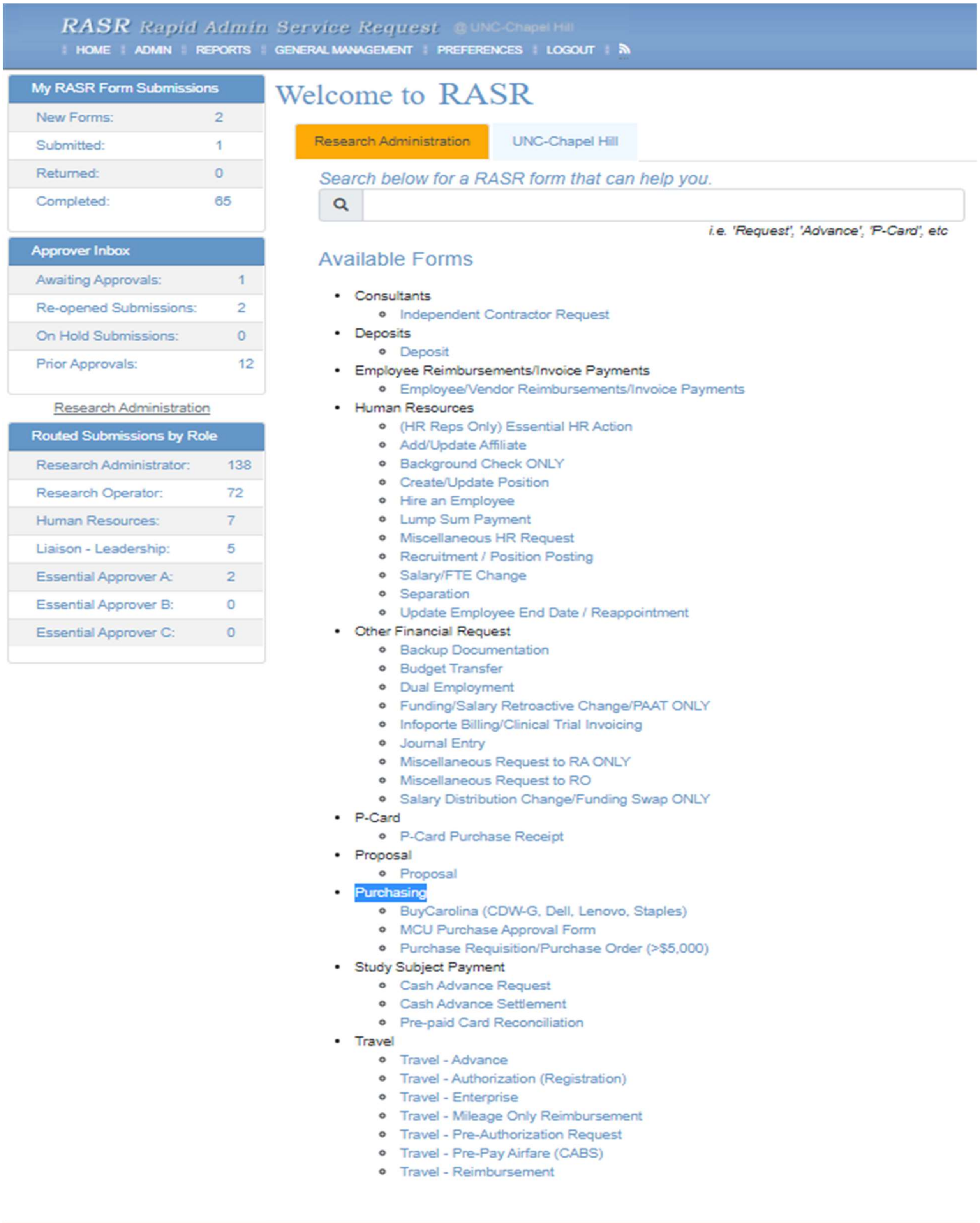
Post-Award Process for Research Administrators

1. Review proposal packages, budgets, correspondence folders etc. to gain an understanding of your projects.
2. Once an award is received:
    a. Initiate subaward process in SIP, if applicable.
    b. Email or meet with the PI to review planned salaries and request approval to process paperwork for personnel effort as discussed/approved.
        i. Save any relevant correspondence related to personnel effort in project information correspondence folder.
    c. Share Research Administrator salary, Research Operator salary, and/or IT budgets with Yana/Megan as soon as an award is received.
        i. Provide information for all project years up front. If information changes, inform Yana/Megan.
        ii. Include project title, chartfield string and budget periods.
    d. Setup new project folder and project report.
3. Post all items as soon as you approve transactions or as soon as you are aware of an encumbrance.
4. Encumber Biostatistics Fees if you have Bio personnel on your projects. At the end of the project period, you may have to contact the Biostatistics Department to ensure they process the Infoporte billing in advance of the end date.
5. Ensure all non-personnel and personnel documents are filed in their appropriate folders.
6. Save pertinent emails in Project Information - Correspondence folder.
7. Update your salary tracking worksheets in SEP as soon as new effort information or changes are known.
    a. Inform Yana/Megan of funding salary shortfalls immediately.
8. As you reconcile, please check budget uploads, subaward budget uploads, and income received (GL).
    a. Make sure OSR uploads match NOA and subcontract documentation.
    b. If you have a clinical trial contract, ensure deposits post and budget is automatically created for revenue.
9. Ensure F&A is calculated correctly.
10. If you reconcile a month and see that non-personnel or personnel items did not post as projected, research the matter, and initiate any necessary request/paperwork as soon as possible.
11. If you notice there is more than one chartfield string associated with a project (see summary ledger report), it is likely that JE's and/or PAAT's will need to be processed to move expenses to the correct Chartfield String. If this is not cleaned up, it can cause billing issues. This does not include chartfield strings that are created for cost share (source 49999).
12. Work with PI at least 90 days before the end of a project to ensure spending plan is on track and to discuss possible budget revisions or no cost extensions.
13. Review a list of your projects once a month to see what closeouts are coming due.
    a. Most closeouts are due 60 days after the end date of a project.
    b. State of NC projects require a quick closeout (OSR must send final invoice to agency no later than 30 days after the end of the project).
14. If a project has ended, but has not closed, determine why, and contact OSR to initiate the closeout process.

a. Priority is handling all active projects, but once caught up, this should be on your to-do list. Projects that have ended but have not closed should continue to be reconciled monthly.

15. If OSR has not officially closed the project, reconcile at least 90 days after the KK end date and then pull the ledgers afterward until closed by OSR.
16. Notify Yana/Megan of any projected or actual project deficits.

Appendix 10: Workflow Tool


RASR Rapid Admin Service Request @ UNC-Chapel Hill

HOME | ADMIN | REPORTS | GENERAL MANAGEMENT | PREFERENCES | LOGOUT

My RASR Form Submissions

New Forms:	2
Submitted:	1
Returned:	0
Completed:	65

Approver Inbox

Awaiting Approvals:	1
Re-opened Submissions:	2
On Hold Submissions:	0
Prior Approvals:	12

Research Administration

Routed Submissions by Role

Research Administrator:	138
Research Operator:	72
Human Resources:	7
Liaison - Leadership:	5
Essential Approver A:	2
Essential Approver B:	0
Essential Approver C:	0

Welcome to RASR

Research Administration | UNC-Chapel Hill

Search below for a RASR form that can help you.

i.e. 'Request', 'Advance', 'P-Card', etc

Available Forms

- Consultants
  - Independent Contractor Request
- Deposits
  - Deposit
- Employee Reimbursements/Invoice Payments
  - Employee/Vendor Reimbursements/Invoice Payments
- Human Resources
  - (HR Reps Only) Essential HR Action
  - Add/Update Affiliate
  - Background Check ONLY
  - Create/Update Position
  - Hire an Employee
  - Lump Sum Payment
  - Miscellaneous HR Request
  - Recruitment / Position Posting
  - Salary/FTE Change
  - Separation
  - Update Employee End Date / Reappointment
- Other Financial Request
  - Backup Documentation
  - Budget Transfer
  - Dual Employment
  - Funding/Salary Retroactive Change/PAAT ONLY
  - Infoporte Billing/Clinical Trial Invoicing
  - Journal Entry
  - Miscellaneous Request to RA ONLY
  - Miscellaneous Request to RO
  - Salary Distribution Change/Funding Swap ONLY
- P-Card
  - P-Card Purchase Receipt
- Proposal
  - Proposal
- Purchasing
  - BuyCarolina (CDW-G, Dell, Lenovo, Staples)
  - MCU Purchase Approval Form
  - Purchase Requisition/Purchase Order (>$5,000)
- Study Subject Payment
  - Cash Advance Request
  - Cash Advance Settlement
  - Pre-paid Card Reconciliation
- Travel
  - Travel - Advance
  - Travel - Authorization (Registration)
  - Travel - Enterprise
  - Travel - Mileage Only Reimbursement
  - Travel - Pre-Authorization Request
  - Travel - Pre-Pay Airfare (CABS)
  - Travel - Reimbursement

Appendix 11: Partnership and Service Level Agreement

Partnership and Service Level Agreement

Research Administration Partnership Agreement

Overview

This document is an agreement between the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) and the signatory unit. The purpose of this document is to create a shared understanding of the defined responsibilities regarding support for pre-award and post-award research administration business needs in addition to non-sponsored financial business processes.

Under the leadership of the Director for Finance and Research Administration, the agreement establishes the parameters under which a Service Center model under the OVCR will provide responsive, proactive, and high-quality services to Center/Institute Directors, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel. Roles are organized to deliver services in a professional and cost-effective manner, providing both subject matter expertise and compliance to relevant policies and procedures.

Commitments and Expectations

Staff managed by the Director for Finance and Research Administration will work closely with the Department Chair, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel to provide a high level of service in a timely manner, as outlined herein. We expect that the Department Chair, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel will work collaboratively with dedicated Service Center staff and respond to requests in a timely manner, as outlined herein.

When expectations of the Department Chair, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel or the Service Center are not met, the Department Chair, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel or the Service Center would bring this to the attention of the Research Administration Manager. If necessary, the Research Administration Manager and/or the Department Chair, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel can escalate the issue to the Director for Finance and Research Administration. If the issue continues, escalation to the OVCR (specifically Andy Johns) is a next step. All parties will endeavor to resolve the issue fairly. However, should the issue be unresolvable, Service Center staff assigned to the signatory unit may be reevaluated and result in reassigning staff within the Service Center.

Communication Methods

The Service Center will require a workspace at each Department for use by Service Center staff when they need to hold office hours and provide a physical presence on a weekly basis or spontaneously to meet the needs of the signatory unit. The signatory unit will identify their preference for a recurring physical preference within the Affirmation of Agreement section of this agreement. Also, the Department Chair, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel will be able to communicate with staff via email, phone, Microsoft Teams, Zoom or in-person meeting.

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee will be comprised of 1 member from each of the units in the Service Center. This Governance Committee will provide feedback, determine the need for amendments to Service Level Agreements, identify areas for continuous improvement, and prioritize areas for investment. The Governance Committee will review performance and identify service gaps for the expectations of the Department Chair, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel and also the Service Center to ensure all parties are fulfilling the requirements outlined by the Service Level Agreements. Governance Committee members for the Service Center include representatives from each supporting unit.

Financial Liabilities

Although the Service Center will provide research administration support to the Department Chair, Principal Investigators and other appropriate personnel in the stewardship of all fund types, true responsibility will remain with the Department. In the event that there is disagreement regarding liability responsibility, leadership of the Department and Service Center can meet to resolve the issue fairly.

Cost Model

The cost model for the Service Center is based on actual Service Center effort estimated to support research administration activities based on existing proposal and financial data. The Department can pay for services from all fund types, if applicable.

Terms of Agreement

This agreement commences on May 1, 2021 and will remain in effect through June 30, 2022 with the mutual understanding that modifications may be required over time. This agreement will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and updated as considered necessary. Updates may become necessary due to changing service needs, modifications to existing services, addition of services, significant variations from agreed upon service levels, or unanticipated events. Any and all modifications will be made in the spirit of the original agreement and must be reviewed by representatives of the Service Center, Governance Committee and Department Chair. In order to support the development of this partnership, both the Department and the Service Center agree to a formal review of this Agreement and published modifications on an annual basis at a minimum and agreement renewal every five years. Parties to this agreement have the right to negate this agreement and any future modifications by informing the Service Center in writing six months prior to agreement termination date.

Affirmation of Agreement

I agree to this agreement including the roles and service expectations outlined herein:

___________________________________	____
Department	Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research
___________________________________	____
Date	Date

N/A at this time due to COVID. This may change at a later date.__________________________________

Service Center Physical Presence Schedule (day of the week and time period)

Attachments: Exhibit A Partnership Agreement Commitments (All-Inclusive)

Research Administration Service Center - Service Level Partnership Agreement
Research Administration: Pre-Award, Post-Award and Financial Management
Research Administration Service Center Responsibilities and Client Responsibilities

Service Description:
Develop Proposal - This includes funding solicitation review, submission timeline development and maintenance, preparation/organization of proposal packet, coordinate and complete submission requirements, budget development, review application terms and conditions, submission to OSR/Sponsor and award notifications/updates.
Respond to Pre-Award Notifications Requests - This includes response to sponsor to follow up information and compliance follow up activities.
Post-Award and Financial Management - This includes communication and approval of financial needs/transactions, sponsor prior approvals, processing financial transactions, effort reporting, monitoring available balances, and award closeout.

Responsibilities	**SC**	**Unit**
Pre Award		
1. New, Non-Competing Continuation, Supplement, and Other Applications		
1a. Process		
Maintain timeline and communicate deadline reminders		X
Review application timeline, checklists, and responsibility matrix as it relates to PI and RASC responsibilities		X
Coordinate documents in accordance with RASC guidance and sponsor terms		X
Review application terms and conditions	X	X
Initiate and Submit IPF in RAMSeS	X	
RASC approve IPF	X	
Initiate Sponsor portal record (Cayuse, Fastlane, etc.)	X	
Review guidance from OSR on PI eligibility and proposal guidelines	X	X
RASC peer/manager review proposal packet	X	
Submit proposal packets to OSR	X	
Monitor for routing to ensure proposal is submitted	X	
1b. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
Document formatting		X
Check for formatting and version control		X
Validate if PI meets criteria for identified applications		X
Contact RASC regarding the withdrawal of an application		X
Contact OSR regarding the withdrawal of an application	X	
Regularly review guidance from Sponsor on policy updates	X	X
2. Organization of Proposal Packet		
2a. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
Conduct regular searches for relevant RFPs		X
PI / Unit identify a RFP (Request for Proposal)		X
Submit a request to RASC for assistance and coordination of the proposal packet		X

Responsibilities	**SC**	**Unit**
Provide materials required for proposal packet definition		X
Prepare proposal packet for compliance and format (Font, Margins, Page Limits, etc.)		X
Develop technical proposal including: Cover letter, Project Summary/Abstract, Project Narrative, Bibliography & References Cited, Facilities & Other Resources, Biographical Sketch, Specific Aims, Research Strategy, Protection of Human Subjects, Data Safety and Monitoring Plan, Resource Sharing Plan(s), Multiple PD/PI Leadership Plan, Consortium/Contractual Arrangements, Introduction for Revision & Resubmission Applications		X
Develop budget justification content based on RASC developed budget		X
Provide detail on effort		X
Coordinate and / or write letters of support		X
Unit determines if proposal will be pursued		X
Review RFA to determine sponsor guidelines	X	X
Develop timeline, checklist for application, and responsibility matrix as it pertains to RASC	X	
Receive and input required subcontract information	X	
Notify RASC regarding cost share and F&A waiver forms (if necessary)		X
Provide cost share and F&A waiver forms (if necessary)	X	
Obtain from Client need and list of contact information for consultants/IC's	X	
Obtain from Client personnel demographic and applicable documentation	X	
Regularly review guidance from OSR	X	X
Provide examples of boilerplate information for proposal (specific to the University, Center, and / or PI) upon request	X	
3. Proposal Budget Development		
3a. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
Provide detail on effort and materials required for proposal packet definition to RASC		X
Seek unit approval for in-kind and cost share agreements		X
Review sponsor budget terms and identify appropriate template	X	
Verify budget limits, unallowable expenses, effort requirements, and payment terms	X	
Assist PI in developing budget using appropriate template	X	
4. Award Notifications and Updates		
4a. Process		
Review award terms and conditions concurrently with OSR and PI / Project Team / Unit Designee (for final / fully negotiated agreements)		
Review budget from proposal stage to confirm no significant changes in effort or salary levels (increases/decreases in award budget will delay award setup)	X	
Review protocol information to ensure IRB / IACUC protocols have been fully approved as needed and are documented in RAMSeS (incomplete will delay award setup)	X	
Review status of COI requirements (incomplete will delay award setup)	X	
Request financial guarantee for award setup with approval from Director / Unit Designee	X	

Responsibilities	**SC**	**Unit**
Upload award notification, revised budgets, or protocol information to the RASR/RAMSeS/RAMTracker record	X	
Conduct monthly follow-up on status of pending applications with OSR and PI / Project Team / Unit Designee	X	
Monitor Project Financial Guarantee (PFG) for expiration and extension	X	
4b. Auditing / Monitoring / Other	X	
Provide JIT information received from PI to OSR/Sponsor and RASC concurrently as applicable		
Provide revised budget documents to OSR/Sponsor and RASC concurrently as applicable		X
Submit IRB/IACUC waiver request to OSR and RASC concurrently if applicable	X	
Review award terms and conditions concurrently with OSR and RASC (for final / fully negotiated agreements)		X
Follow up with personnel who have not completed COI requirements		X
Route notification of award / documentation to the OSR and RASC concurrently if received directly		X
5. Funding Source Setup		
5a. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
Communicate Project ID needs or changes to the RASC		X
Review initial setup (budget load) of award for accuracy	X	
Submit request to OSR for additional Project IDs or changes	X	
6. Subcontract Setup and Monitoring		
6a. Process		
Communicate post-award subcontract needs or changes to the RASC; collect subcontract documentation and communicate request to RASC (Follow Sections 1-3 above)		X
For after the fact subcontracts (not included in the original proposal); collect subcontract documentation and communicate request to RASC (Follow Sections 1-3 above)		X
Submit request to OSR for additional Project IDs or changes	X	
Verify if prior approval is needed from the Sponsor to establish after the fact subcontracts, including renewal or termination	X	
6b. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
Provide confirmation to RASC of returned subcontract (if changes in subawards); initiating unit / PI to approve		X
7. No Cost Extensions, Budget Revisions, and Prior Approval Request (Project Modification Requests)		
7a. Process		
Coordinate with RASC basic (NIH for example) vs complex (CDC/NCDHHS for example) no cost extension, budget revision, changes in scope, changes in personnel, changes in effort and other prior approval requests		X
Prepare justifications, rationale and associated materials for requests		X
Prepare budgetary materials for requests	X	
Submit requests to OSR and RASC concurrently	X	

Responsibilities	**SC**	**Unit**
Submit standard internal to UNC budget revision requests to OSR	X	
At 180 days, 120 days, 90 days, etc. before end of project, notify PI / Unit Designee of balance in each line item and discuss plan for Budget Revision	X	
8. Cost Share Agreements		
8a. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
Identify cost share sources		X
Advise PI / Unit Designee and unit of cost share commitments and potential risks	X	
Monitor and track all cost share commitments	X	
Post-Award and Financial Management		
9. Processing of Standard Purchases and Invoices		
9a. Process		
Communicate purchase needs and establishment of independent contractors to RASC		X
Approve sub-award invoices		X
Approve high risk items such as equipment, foreign travel, and cash advances		X
Departmental approval of sponsored research fund transactions, ensuring allowability and allocability of expenses as well as sufficiency of funds	X	
Director / Unit Designee approval of non-sponsored research fund transactions, ensuring allowability and allocability of expenses as well as sufficiency of funds	X	
RASC approval of transactions, ensuring allowability and allocability of expenses as well as sufficiency of funds	X	
Work with the PI / Director / Unit Designee to meet PI / Director needs where transactions are not approved	X	
Provide direction and / or approval to Research Ops Specialist	X	
Communicate pCard allowances and approve pCard use	X	
Process invoices and purchase requisitions/orders in accordance with university and funding agency policies	X	X
Process pCard, CBM, and petty cash reconciliation and collect receipts	X	X
Setup vendors and independent contractors	X	X
Create vouchers for vendor payments	X	X
Monitor invoice approval to ensure payment or provide revisions as needed	X	X
Submit transactions for reimbursement	X	X
Review and submit cash advance reconciliations	X	X
At 180 days, 120 days, 90 days, etc. before end of project, notify PI / Director / Unit Designee of balance and advice that big purchases cannot be made towards the end of the project	X	
10. Processing of Purchase Requisitions/Orders		
10a. Process		
Communicate purchase needs at or above $5k to service center		X
Review expenses for allowability and allocability of expenses as well as sufficiency of fund; prepare cost transfers if necessary	X	
Provide direction and / or approval to Research Ops Specialist	X	

Responsibilities	**SC**	**Unit**
Obtain from PI / Unit Designee sole source or request to bid information and vendor quotes	X	
Set-up vendors and independent contractors	X	
Create vouchers for vendor payments	X	
Monitor invoice approval to ensure payment or provide revisions as needed	X	
At 180 days, 120 days, 90 days, etc. before end of project, notify PI / Unit Designee of unliquidated PO's that need resolution prior to the end of the project	X	
11. Funding Swaps		
11a. Process		
Secure funding and PI / Director / Unit Designee approval for salary distributions		X
Notify changes in work force to RASC in conjunction with HR		X
Communicate hire needs to RASC in conjunction with HR		X
Facilitate all personnel actions required by the PI / Director / Unit Designee	X	
Process ePARs and PAATs	X	X
Coordinate with HR Specialists/Consultants and Unit PI / Director / Unit Designee	X	
Approve ePARs and PAATs (Level 2)	X	
Monitor awards and proactively alert the PI / Director / Unit Designee to potential staffing shifts driven by funds, outlining options	X	
Management of Funding Grids / Pay Plans for Department Staff based on information provided by the department (home/funding) and/or PI / Director / Unit Designee	X	
12. Travel Support		
12a. Process		
Communicate travel needs to the RASC		X
For CABS, work with travel agency to obtain preferred flight information (itinerary and cost) and provide to RASC		X
Approve travel requests for project staff		X
Coordinate travel inquiries as needed		X
Complete Medevac template for submission to RASC		X
Review for allowability, allocability and sufficiency of funds for all travel and expense transactions types and approve	X	
Communicate travel policies to PI or project / lab staff	X	
Review and submit Medevac template to Risk Management	X	
Submit travel requests / travel advances / CABS	X	
12b. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
Verify Chartfield String	X	
13. Award Balance Monitoring, Burn Rate, Rate of Spend, and Forecasting		
13a. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
Review monthly reports (all fund types and cost share commitments) for accuracy and meet quarterly with RASC		X
Ensure and confirm satisfactory subcontracts progress is being made		X
Monitor burn rate on a monthly basis and notify PI / Director / Unit Designee	X	

Responsibilities	**SC**	**Unit**
Generate and review monthly financial reports; include narrative explanation for discrepancies or difficult to understand situations	X	
Share monthly report with the PI / Director / Unit Designee via access to repository	X	
Run reports to assess burn rate based on ad-hoc reporting requesting and changes in forecasting to maintain appropriate spend levels	X	
Confirm personnel or non-personnel spend changes (cost transfers, ePARs) with PI / Director / Unit Designee	X	
Peer/Manager review of financial reports prior to submissions to PI / Director / Unit Designee	X	
At 180 days, 120 days, 90 days, etc. before end of project, notify PI / Director / Unit Designee of balance and discuss plans to end project; notify PI of balance including balances in each specific category for restricted funds	X	
14. Effort Reporting		
14a. Process		
Partner with PI / Director / Unit Designee to distribute/track effort reporting and certification	X	
Initial email to Center/Institute staff informing them not to certify effort statements until notified by RASC	X	
Review effort statements concurrently with PI / Director / Unit Designee	X	
RASC notify personnel when they are ready to certify	X	
Approve effort statements		X
Communicate effort policies to PI / Director / Unit Designee and research staff, including impact of variances, if they occur	X	
15. Award Closeout		
15a. Process		
Submit final technical reports and invention statements to OSR		X
Approve final financial reports from OSR with RASC	X	X
Prepare close-out and provide to PI / Director / Unit Designee for review and approval	X	
At 180 days, 120 days, 90 days, etc. before end of project, notify PI / Director / Unit Designee of balance and discuss plans to end project; coordinate with department related to staffing changes	X	
Ensure all appropriate expenditures and cost transfers are posted in preparation of final FFR and closeout; left balances in Fixed Price Contracts can be moved to Residuals	X	
16. Systems Access		
16a. Process		
PI / Director / Unit Designee communicate new user access needs (Backbone, ConnectCarolina, Infoporte, etc.)		X
PI / Director / Unit Designee return completed access request forms, if applicable to RASC		X
Submit access request forms		X
16b. Auditing / Monitoring / Other		
PI / Director / Unit Designee communicate user access removals		X

Responsibilities	SC	Unit
PI / Director / Unit Designee return completed access request forms, if applicable to RASC		X
Review access request periodically according to campus schedule and when there are employee separations		X

Service Level Measure	Target Business Days/% Completion	SC	Unit
% of Proposals Submitted on Time to RASC per AVC of Shared Services Guidelines	100%		X
% of Proposals Submitted on Time to OSR	75%	X	
% of Proposals Submitted on Time to Sponsor	100%	X	
% Completion of RASC Satisfaction Survey	85%		X
Client Satisfaction - Pre-Award Support	85%	X	
PI / Director / Unit Designee will notify RASC before proposal deadline, once funding source identified	30 Days		X
PI / Director / Unit Designee will notify RASC of budget requirements	30 Days		X
RASC will provide all final proposal and budget elements received to review with PI, prior to deadline	10 Days	X	
RASC to submit proposal to OSR for review and submission to agency, prior to deadline	5 Days	X	
RASC will provide budget revisions when requested from OSR	3 Days	X	
RASC will coordinate with PI / Director / Unit Designee on submission of sponsor prior approvals	3 Days	X	
RASC will provide reports comparing current state against budget	Monthly	X	
RASC will meet with PI / Director / Unit Designee to go over financial reports comparing current state against budget	Quarterly	X	
PI / Director / Unit Designee will communicate need for ad hoc reports in advance	3 Days		X
RASC will develop ad-hoc reports requested from PI / Director / Unit Designee	3 Days	X	
RASC will complete appropriate vouchers, journal entries, and travel	3 Days	X	
RASC will complete appropriate CABS	1 Day	X	
RASC will verify allowability of hiring needs communicated by PI / Director / Unit Designee prior to final approval	3 Days	X	
RASC will initiate and complete fund swaps and retro payroll actions	5 Days	X	
PI / Director / Unit Designee will communicate purchasing needs to RASC in advance	5 Days		X
RASC will verify allowability of purchases once notified by PI / Director / Unit Designee	3 Days	X	
PI / Director / Unit Designee will approve subaward invoices in advance	3 Days		X

Appendix 12: Biography

Tonya LeShea Jenkins received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2002. Tonya joined the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in June 2016 where she is Director of Finance and Research Administration. Tonya also provides financial oversight for the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development at the University. Prior to her current position, from 2006 to 2016, she had two, five-year positions as Assistant Director for two research centers, Injury Prevention Research Center and Center for Women's Health Research. Prior to moving into to Administration, from 2002 to 2006, she was involved in the conduct of research in the areas of Pediatric Nephrology, Hematology Oncology, and Obstetrics and Gynecology.